

King of Scoundrels



James VI of Scotland and I of England
(1566–1625)

“I never read a more malicious-minded author, nor any who had such poor and mean observations.”

—Godfrey Goodman ¹

“A certain author ² should say that with some regret of what he had maliciously written did intend it for the fire, and died repentant; though since stolen to the press out of a Lady’s closet; and if this be true, our exceptions may willingly fall upon the practice of the publisher of the said libel, who by his additions may abuse us with a false story, and therefore in some manner gives us occasion to spare our censure on Sir Anthony [Welldon], who was dead some time before the said libel was published.”

—*Antiquarian Repertory* ³

¹ On offering his opinion on the author, Anthony Welldon.

² William Sanderson in his *Proem*, to the *Reign and Death of King James I*, printed 1653, Folio.

³ Vol. III, 1780.



Sir Anthony Welldon
(d.1649)

Sir Anthony Welldon (or Weldon) was the author of *The Court and Character of King James I*, which came into publication in 1650 (12mo).⁴ A second edition appeared in 1651 with an additional section, entitled: *The Court of King Charles*; this was reprinted in the *Secret History of the Court of James I*, in 1811(2 volumes). Within its pages, is a scandalous gossip about two Kings and their Ministers and favourites. A few of the stories embody personal reminiscences, or information received from personages concerned in the incidents related.

⁴ Manuscripts of it are to be found in the Harleian MS., 5191, Lansdowne MS. 973, and the Record Office (Cal. State Papers, Dom. 1623–5, P. 550).

Heylyn (historian) in his *Examen Historicum*, summarily dismisses Welldon's book as a libel. It was immediately answered by William Sanderson in *Aulicus Coquinariae*.⁵ A second answer was written, and can be found in Goodman's *Court of King James I*, which was first published by Brewer in 1839. Subjoined to Welldon's *Memoirs* was *The Character of Scotland*, the entire written during a visit of King James to his native and original Kingdom, in 1617, and contains a severe and satirical account of the poverty and fanatical manners of the Scottish nation at that period.

Welldon's work, having been found wrapped up in one of the records of the Board of Green Cloth, was traced back to its author, and led to his dismissal from Court. The satire seems to have crept to the press like *The Court and Character of King James*, after the author's death. That it is the libel of Welldon mentioned by Wood, appears as well by internal evidence as from the period at which it was written. It seems to have been compiled in the shape of a letter from Edinburgh.

Godfrey Goodman (d.1655) compiled a professed answer to Welldon's libels, entitled: *The Court of King James, by Sir A.W. Reviewed*, which, as Wood informs us, still exists in the Bodleian library. Wood, in his Introduction says: "The author of the said *Court and Character of King James* was one Sir Anthony Welldon, of Kent, whose parent took rise from Queen Elizabeth's kitchen, and left it a legacy for preferment of his issue. Sir Anthony went the same way, and by grace of the Court got up to the Green Cloth; in which place, attending King James into Scotland, he practiced there to libel that nation. Which, at his return home, was wrapped up in a record of that Board; and by the hand being known to be his, he was deservedly removed from his place; as unworthy to eat his bread, whose birthright he had so vile defamed. Yet, by favour of the King, with a piece of money in his purse, and a pension to boot, to preserve him loyal during his life, though, as a bad creditor, he took this course to repay him to the purpose. In his lifetime, he discovered part of this piece to his fellow-courtier, who earnestly dissuaded him not to publish so defective and false a scandal; which, as it seems, in conscience he so declined."

Welldon died in 1649, but during his life, he was a historical writer of Swanscombe (Kent) and had descended from a younger branch of the family of Weltden of Northumberland.

⁵ Reprinted in *Secret History of James I*, Vol. II, p. 91, and also in his *Complete History of the Lives and Reigns of Mary Queen of Scots and her son James*, 1656.

His father, Sir Ralph Welldon, was Knighted on July 24, 1603, and was Clerk of the Green Cloth to Elizabeth I and James I. His uncle (Anthony) was a clerk of the kitchen.

Young Welldon, who succeeded to his uncle's office on the resignation of the latter in 1604, and to his father's in 1609, was Knighted on May 11, 1617.⁶ He accompanied James to Scotland in 1617, and is said to have been dismissed from his post at Court in consequence of the discovery of his authorship of the libel we will give which was against the Scottish nation.⁷

Two letters written by Welldon to Secretary Windebank in 1634 prove that he still kept friends at Court.⁸ Other letters, including a scheme for the better assessment of ship money and a complaint against the gunpowder monopoly, show signs of hostility to the government of Charles I.⁹ During the civil war, Welldon was one of the chief men in the Parliamentary Committee in Kent, and energetically maintained the authority of Parliament during the insurrections which took place in that county in 1643 and 1648.¹⁰ On October 24, 1648, Parliament ordered £500 as a reward for his faithful services.¹¹

I offer the reader the full text of Welldon's work with some changes in spelling and grammatical arrangements to suit the modern reader and also with additional insertions from historical records.

The Court and Character of King James I¹²

Printed 1650

By Sir Anthony Welldon, of Kent

The Publisher to the Reader

Amongst the many remarkable passages in this short relation, the reader may take notice of five things here discovered.

⁶ (a) Hasted. *History of Kent*, Vol. I, p. 261 (b) Nichols. *Progresses of James I*, Vol. III, p. 299.

⁷ *Secret History of James I*, Vol. II, p. 102.

⁸ Cal. State Papers, Dom. 1633-4, pp. 220, 244.

⁹ (a) Cal. State Papers, Dom. 1637-8, pp. 233, 598 (b) Larking. *Proceedings in Kent*, p. 48.

¹⁰ (a) Report on the Duke of Portland's Manuscripts, Vol. I, pp. 296, 312, 472, 708 (b) Tanner MSS, IXII, pp. 175, 179 (c) Clarke Papers, Vol. II, p. 15.

¹¹ Commons' *Journals*, Vol. VI, p. 61.

¹² Manuscripts of it are to be found in Harleian MS 5191, Lansdowne MS 973, and the Record Office (Cal. State Papers, Dom. 1623-5, p. 550).

First, how Almighty God was mocked, and the world abused, by Tuesday Sermons at Court, and the anniversary festivals upon the fifth of August, in commemoration of King James's deliverance from the Gowrie's conspiracy; whereas indeed, there was no such matter, but a mere feigned thing, as appears by the story.

Secondly, how this Kingdom was gulled in the supposed treason of Sir Walter Raleigh and others, who suffered as traitors; whereas, to this day, it could never be known that ever there was any such treason; but a mere trick of State to remove some blotches out of the way.

Thirdly, the fearful imprecation made by King James against himself and his posterity, in the presence of many of his servants, and the judges, even upon his knees, if he would spare any that were found guilty in the poisoning business of Sir Thomas Overbury: but how he failed this story will tell you; and how the justice of God has been and is upon himself and posterity, his own death by poison, and the sufferings of his posterity, do sufficiently manifest.

Fourthly, the untimely death of that hopeful Prince Henry is here partly discovered; if the reader cannot in this discourse spell by what hand he was taken away, yet may he observe a strange connivance at, and contentedness with the thing done.

Fifthly, here we may see what a slave King James was to his favourites; this appears by many passages of this story, but especially, by his passion at Greenwich, when the Lieutenant of the Tower told him of Somerset's threatening speeches, and by his agony, till he heard that Somerset took his arraignment patiently, and had told no tales.

The Publisher

Weldon's Account

On March 24, 1602, did set the most glorious sun that ever shined in our firmament of England, (the never to be forgotten Queen Elizabeth, of happy memory) about three in the morning, at her Manor of Richmond, not only to the unspeakable grief of her servants in particular, but all her subjects in general. And although many of her Courtiers adored that

rising sun appearing in the North, [King James,] yet since (not without regret) of their monstrous ingratitude to that sun now set, and in peace.

No sooner was that sun set, but Sir Robert Carew (her near Kinsman, and whose family and himself she had raised from the degree of a mean Gentleman, to high honour, in title and place) most ungratefully did catch at her last breath, to carry it to the rising sun then in Scotland, notwithstanding a strict charge laid to keep fast all the gates, yet, his father being Lord Chamberlain, he by that means found favour to get out, to carry the first news; which although it obtained for him the Governorship of the Duke of York, yet had set so wide a mark of ingratitude on him, that it will remain to posterity a greater blot than the honour he obtained afterward will ever wipe out.

*

When Queen Elizabeth I died, on March 24, 1603, there were some prejudices against the accession of a foreigner, and as the Crown had not always descended in a regular succession, the Elizabethan Privy Council did not immediately upon the notice of Elizabeth's death proclaim James as King, but spent several hours in deliberating together, and in feeling each other's pulses on this most important subject. Under such circumstances the High Sheriff of Hampshire took a bold and decided part, which proved his attachment to the House of the Stewards: Instead of waiting for the orders of the Council in London, the result of whose deliberations could not with any certainty be known, the High Sheriff on hearing that Elizabeth was dead, hurried over to Winchester, and there proclaimed James, King of England. This bold fellow was Sir Benjamin Tichborne; he came from a family more ancient in England than the conquest who had been Knighted by Elizabeth in 1601 in her progress to Basing. It may seem extraordinary that Elizabeth should lavish her favours on known Catholic Recusants, as the Mayor of Winchester, Sir Henry Tichborne, Lord Montague, and the Earl of Southampton just to name a few who were Catholic; yet so the case stood. She knew how to retain the laws in favour of those who pleased her.¹³

But we also have another hasty messenger who wanted to give the news of Elizabeth's death to James: this was Sir Robert Carey, who waited under the windows of the Palace at Richmond, until a token ring was thrown to him from the window, with which he posted off to

¹³ (a) Nichols, *Progresses of King James I* (1828), Vol. I; (b) Drake's *History of York*, p. 130.

Scotland, and was cordially received by James, as the bearer of tidings of great joy. Here is his written venture from his autobiography:

“Very early on Saturday, I took horse for the north, and rode to Norham about twelve at noon, so that I might have been with King James at supper time: but I got a great fall by the way, that made me shed much blood. I was forced to ride at a soft pace after, so that King James was newly gone to bed by the time I knocked at his gate. I was quickly let in, and carried up to his chamber. I kneeled by him, and saluted him by his titles of King of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland. The King gave me his hand to kiss, and bade me welcome. He inquired of the manner of Queen Elizabeth’s death and sickness. He asked what letters from the Privy Council. I told him none; yet had I brought him a blue ring from a fair Lady, which I hoped would give him assurance that I reported the truth. He took it and looked upon it, and said, ‘It is enough; I know by this you are a true messenger.’ Then he [James] committed me to the care of the Lord Hume,¹⁴ charging him that I should want for nothing. He sent for his surgeons to attend me, and, when I kissed his hand to withdraw, he said these gracious words: ‘I know you have lost a near Kinswoman,¹⁵ and a loving Mistress; but here, take my hand, I will be as good a master to you, and will requite this service with honour and reward.’”

King James kept a constant and private correspondence with several persons of the English Court during many years before Elizabeth died. Among them was Lady Scroope, sister to Sir Robert Carey, to whom James sent, by Sir James Fullerton, a sapphire ring, with positive

¹⁴ Wood’s Douglas, Vol. I, p. 736: “Alexander Hume, sixth Lord Hume, was served heir to his father November 1, 1580, in the offices of Sheriff of Berwick and Bailie of Laudurdale. He stood high in the favour of King James; and was very instrumental in suppressing the insurrection of Bothwell in 1592, for which he had a grant of the dissolved Priory of Coldingham. Being a Roman Catholic, he made his repentance in the New Kirk, before the Assembly, on his knees, May 17, 1594; and in 1599 he was sent on a secret Embassy to Rome, to gain the favour of the Roman Catholic Princes, as a necessary precaution towards facilitating James’s accession to the English throne. He was sworn a Privy Counselor to James whom in April, 1603, entertained at Dunglass, and accompanying the King to England, was there naturalized. He was created Earl of Hume and Lord Dunglass, to him and his heirs male whatever, March 4, 1604/5; had charters of the benefices of Coldingham and Jedburgh, united into the temporal Lordship of Coldingham, May 20, 1610; and of East Gordon and Fogo, February 7, 1612. Alexander Hume died April 5, 1619.”

¹⁵ Sir Robert Carey and his sister were cousins, in the third degree to Queen Elizabeth by descent from Mary Boleyn and William Carey. Elizabeth’s mother (Anne Boleyn) was from a noble family. Her father Thomas was the Earl of Wiltshire and her mother was the daughter of the Duke of Norfolk.

orders to return it to him by a special messenger as soon as the Queen was actually dead. Lady Scroope had no opportunity of delivering it to her brother whilst he was in the Palace of Richmond; but waiting at the window till she saw him at the gate, she threw it to him.¹⁶ The King, a few days after, asked Sir Robert Carey what reward he wished, who replied he wished to be made a gentleman of his bed-chamber.

“I was then sworn of his bed-chamber, and that very evening I helped to take off his clothes, and stayed till he was in bed. Upon the report of the Queen’s death, the East Border broke forth into great unruliness, insomuch as many complaints came to the King thereof. I was desirous to go to appease them, but I was so weak and ill of my head, that I was not able to undertake such a journey; but I offered that I would send any two deputies, that should appease the trouble and make them quiet, which was by them shortly after effected. Now I was to begin a new world; for, by the King’s coming to the Crown, I was to lose the best part of my living. For my office of Wardenry ceased, and I lost the pay of forty horses, which were not so little both as £1,000 per annum. Most of the great ones at Court envied my happiness, when they heard I was sworn of the King’s bed-chamber; and in Scotland I had no acquaintance; I only relied on God and the King. The one never left me, the other, shortly after his coming to London, deceived my expectation, and adhered to those that sought my ruin.”

Lord Corke at the time offered his opinion and some insight on Carey’s sayings that will further lead us to understand King James’s character: “Neither the severities of Osborne, nor the more just censure of Rapin, nor several bitter strokes that have been vented by every late writer against James have wounded that Monarch so effectually as what here falls from Sir Robert Carey’s pen. Osborne may be said to write with rage; Rapin not to be totally free from prejudice; most of the others, to swim with the stream, and not to give themselves sufficient time to weigh the good and evil; but the author of these *Memoirs* appears so evidently void of that haste which accompanies revenge, that what he here says of himself and his royal Master may be depended upon as a truth; a truth that shows how unhappily King James was governed

¹⁶ Brydges’ *Peers of King James*, p. 413.

by favourites, and how easily he forgot his promises.”¹⁷ Yet, the State Papers of the time present Sir Robert Carey as being unable to disguise his selfishness: “At the same time, they greatly reprobate the officiousness of the self-appointed envoy, Carey; this probably caused his hope for reward to be delayed some months. He mourns over his disappointed hopes, in his autobiography, with so little disguise of selfishness, that his lamentations are truly laughable.”

The hurried expedition of Sir Robert Carey was quickly followed by an express from the English Privy Council inviting James to come to London, and take possession of his hereditary right, as he had been proclaimed, on March 24, 1603, King of England, by the title of James I, and the inhabitants that night lighted bonfires; an event that grief for the loss of their late mistress was confined to a few.¹⁸ The expense of James and his train in his journey from Scotland appears from an authenticated statement to have been £10,752 whereas funeral charges of Elizabeth were £17,498.

*

About nine in the morning of that day was proclaimed King James by the name of James the first; and now nothing on all hands, but preparations for accommodating him in his journey for England, many posting into Scotland for preferment, either by endearing themselves by some merit of their own to the King, or by purchasing friends with their purses, (gold and silver being a precious commodity, and would procure anything) and did procure suits, honours, and offices to any that first came; of all which the King afterward extended his bounty in so large and ample a manner, as procured his own impoverishment to the pressure of his subjects, so far as set some distance between him and them, which his wisdom, and King’s craft, could easily at all times reconcile.

The first that came from the King to the Lords in England, to give order for all things necessary for the expediting his journey towards England, was Sir Roger Aston, an Englishman born, but had his breeding wholly in Scotland and had served the King many years as his barber,¹⁹ an honest and free-hearted man of an ancient family in Cheshire, but of no breeding answerable to his birth; yet he was the only man ever employed as a messenger from

¹⁷ Lord Corke, Sir Robert Carey’s *Memoirs*.

¹⁸ Devereux B. Walter, *Lives and Letters of the Devereux Earls of Essex, in the Reigns of Elizabeth, James I, and Charles I* (1853), Vol. II.

¹⁹ Sir Roger Aston was groom of the chamber to James I.

the King to Elizabeth, as a letter carrier only, which expressed their own intentions without any help from him, besides the delivery, but even in that capacity was in very good esteem with her Majesty, receiving very royal rewards which did enrich him, and gave him a better revenue than most Gentlemen in Scotland; for the Queen did find him as faithful to her as to his Master, in which he showed much wisdom, though of no breeding.

In this employment I must not pass over one pretty passage I have heard himself relate; that he did never come to deliver any letters from his Master, but ever he was placed in the lobby; the hangings being turned him, where he might see the Queen dancing to a little fiddle which was to no other end, then that he should tell his Master by her youthful disposition, how likely he was to come to the possession of the Crown he so much thirsted; for you must understand, the wisest in that Kingdom did believe the King should never enjoy this Crown, as long as there was an old wife in England which they did believe we ever set up, as the other was dead.

Aston presenting himself before the Council, being but a plain untutored man, being asked how he did and courted by all the Lords, lighted upon this happy reply: “Even my Lords, like a poor man wandering above forty year in a wilderness, and barren soul, am now arrived at the Land of Promise.”

This man was afterwards made Gentleman of the Bed-chamber, Master of the Wardrobe, and invested with such honours and offices as he was capable of that enabled him to live in a noble way during his life, and to leave his daughters great fortunes; but had you seen how the Lords did courtesies to this poor Gentleman, striving who should engross that commodity by the largest bounty, you could not but have condemned them of much baseness, especially seeing when at this time, offices and great places of honour will not be accepted from that son, the barber of whose father was so much courted, but to speak a good word on their behalf; surely the times are much altered.

And now all preparation was made to meet the King in York, that he might in that Northern Metropolis appear like a King of England, take that state on him there, which was not known in Scotland. There met him all the Lords of the Council, and there did they all make Court to the Scotchmen that were most in favour with the King; there did the Scotch Courtiers lay the first foundation of their English fortunes; the chief of them was Sir George Hume, a kind of favourite, but not such as after appeared with young faces and smooth chins, but one

that for his wisdom and gravity had been in some secret Councils with his Master, which created that dearness between them; and the chief of those secrets was that of the Gowrie Conspiracy, though that nation gave little credit to the story, but would speak both slightly and despitefully of it with those of the wisest of that nation.

*



Queen Anne of Denmark
(1574–1619)

Tuesday, August 5, 1600, King James (Mary Queen of Scots' son) after hunting for four hours, rides to visit Lord Gowrie, a neighbour. After lunch, that nobleman and his brother are slain in their own house by the King's attendants. The King gives his version of the events instantly; he never varies from it in any essential point, but the story is almost incredible. On the other hand, the slain men cannot speak, and only one of them, if both were innocent, could have told what occurred. Maybe James had a more personal desire for eliminating Gowrie. Queen Anne of Denmark has sometimes been implicated with the Gowrie Plot; but she is only connected with it by a tie, slight as a silver ribbon, according to the following tale of Court gossip, which is of peculiarity.

“One day, in the summer preceding the birth of Charles I, the Queen was walking in the gardens of Falkland Palace with her favourite maid of honour, Beatrice, when they came to a tree, under which Alexander Ruthven, who was but a youth of nineteen, laid fast asleep, overcome by the heat, or violent exercise. The Queen, it is said by some, and by others (Beatrice Ruthven) tied a silver ribbon round his neck, which had recently been given to the Queen by the King, without disturbing his repose. Presently, King James himself came by, with his attendants; the silver ribbon caught his attention, and he bent over the sleeper, and gazed on it very earnestly. The King, instead of waking Ruthven, (who, by the way, was a gentleman of his own bed-chamber,) and asking him how he came by the ribbon, went his way, leaving the youth still sleeping.

Back instantly came Beatrice Ruthven, who had been anxiously watching the demeanour of the King, twitched the ribbon from round her brother's neck and fled, leaving him, it must be supposed, in a sleep as sound as the Celtic hero Oscar, who could only be roused by a monstrous stone being hurled against his head. Meantime, Beatrice rushed into the Queen's presence, and threw this ribbon into a drawer, telling her Majesty that her reason for so doing would be presently discovered.

King James, directly after, entered on the scene, and demanded the sight of his silver ribbon, in the tone of Othello asking for the fated handkerchief; but the Queen of Scotland, luckier than Desdemona, quietly took out the silver ribbon from the drawer into which Beatrice had just shut it, and placed it in his hands. James examined it earnestly for some time, and then pronounced this oracular sentence in broad Scotch: 'Evil take me, if like be not an ill mark.'

From this pantomimic story the writers of the seventeenth century have drawn the inference that King James himself contrived the Gowrie Plot against his own life in order to revenge his jealous suspicions against the youth, Alexander Ruthven and his Queen;²⁰ yet, as the sister of the hero of the tale was concerned throughout the whole of the fantastic trifling with the silver ribbon, there is no reason to fix any stigma on the Queen, or on anyone else. But those acquainted with the physiology of plots in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, will not be surprised that a great calumny should have as sight a foundation.

*

Yet there was a weekly commemoration by the Tuesday Sermon, and an anniversary feast as great as it was possible for the preservation ever on August 5. Just upon which day as Sir John Ramsey, after Earl of Holderness, for his good service in that preservation was the principal guest, so did the King grant him any boon he would ask that day; but had such limitations set to his asking, as made his suit as unprofitable to him as that he asked it for was unserviceable to the King, and indeed did make the English believe as little the truth of that story as the Scots themselves did; yet on my conscience the good Gentleman did in that as a

²⁰ Pinkerton. *Life of the Earl of Gowry*.

liar often does, by telling a lie often believes it to be a very truth; but the truth was (although he was not a man capable of much himself) yet had it been true, there was too little done for him, being not true too much; for being an Earl he was in very little esteem either with his Master or with the better sort of Courtiers.

This Sir George Hume being the only man that was the guider of the King and of his affairs, all the wiser sort of English made their addresses unto him; among those, Sir Robert Cecil, a very wise man but much hated in England by reason of the fresh bleeding of that universally beloved Earl of Essex, and for that was clouded also in the King's favour. He came to York but lay close and unseen, scarce known to be in the city, until he knew what entertainment he should receive from the King; for he was in his own and all men's opinions, so under the hatches as not ever to appear above board again (nor did any of the counter faction to Essex besides himself, ever attained to the King's favour) but those friends raised by his wit and purse, did so co-operate (of which Aston, that plain man was principal for which he lost not his labour) that Hume and Cecil had many secret meetings, did so comply to the admiration of all. It did appear and come out of his chamber like a giant, to run his race for honour and fortune; and who in such dearness and privacy with the King as Cecil: as if he had been his faithful servant many years before; yet did not either his friends, wit or wealth raise him so much (as some believe) as the ill offices done by him to this nation, in discovering the nature of the people, and showing the King the way how to enhance his prerogative so above the laws, that he might enslave the nation, which though it took well then, yet it had been of sad and dangerous consequences in after times; for first he caused a whole cartload of Parliament Presidents, that spoke on the subjects' liberty, to be burnt; next, raising £200,000 for making two hundred Baronets, telling the King he should find his English subjects like asses, on whom he might lay any burden, and should neither bite nor bridle, but their asses ears; and when the King said it would discontent the generality of the gentry, he replied: "Tush, Sir, you want the money, that will do you good, the honour will do them very little."

And by these courses he [Hume] raised himself, friends and family, to offices, honours, and great possessions, yet as a punishment, he lived long enough to have lost all, had not death prevented him between the Bath and London; for the Duke of Bullion being then there, about the overture of that unfortunate match between the Palsgrave and the Lady Elizabeth, had so done his errand, and discovered his juggling; it is most certain, he had been stripped of all at

his return, which he well understanding from friends at Court did expedite his end; but he died opportunely to save his honour and estate, for his posterity, though to leave a mark of ignominy on himself by that Herodian disease, that for all his great honours and possessions and stately houses, he found no place but the top of a mole-hill, near Maleborough to end his miserable life; so that it may be said of him, and truly, he died of a most loathsome disease without house, without pity, without the favour of that Master that had raised him to so high an estate; and yet must he have that right done him (which is also a note of the misfortune of our times) there had not been any since his time that equaled him to fulfill the Proverb, *seldom comes a better*; he had great parts, was very wise, full of honour and bounty, a great lover and rewarder of virtue, and able parts in others, so they did not aspire too high in places or look too narrowly into his actions.

The next came on the public theatre in favour: Henry Howard, a younger son of the Duke of Norfolk, and Lord Thomas Howard, the one after Earl of Northampton, the other Earl of Suffolk. Lord Chamberlain, and after Lord Treasurer, who by Cecil's greatness with that family, rather than by any merit or wisdom in themselves, raised many great families of his children. Northampton, though a great clerk yet not a wise man, was the grossest flatterer of the world, and as Cecil by his wit, so this by his flattery raised himself; yet one great motive to the raising of that name Howard was the Duke of Norfolk, suffering for the Queen of Scots, the King's mother. Suffolk so far forgot the start of Northampton, that Northampton never after loved him but from teeth outwards. He had so much discretion as not to run to actual enmity, to the overthrow of both, and the weakening of their faction. Suffolk was also using him with all submissive respect, not for any love, but for the hope of gaining his great estate and sharing it amongst his children. Northampton's distaste was such by his loss of the Treasurer's place, which he had with such assurance promised to himself in his thoughts, that except what he gave to Howard, the rest he gave to the Earl of Arundel, who by his observance, but more especially by giving Northampton all his estate if he never returned from travel, he had wrought himself so far into his affection, that he doted on him.

And now the principal managers of the English affairs were Cecil, Suffolk, Northampton, Buckhurst, Egerton (Lord Keeper), Worcester, and the old Admiral for the Scots, Sir George Hume, now Earl of Dunbar, Secretary Elfeston after the Earl of Balmerino, and as wise a man as was in England or Scotland, the Lord of Kinlosse, a very honest but weak

man. You are now to observe, that Cecil had shaken off all that were great with him and of his faction in Queen Elizabeth's day, as Sir Walter Raleigh, Sir George Carew, the Lord Grey, the Lord Cobham.

The three first, were very able men as the world had, the last but one degree from a fool, yet served their turns better than a wiser man by his greatness with the Queen, for they would put him on anything, and make him tell any lie with as great confidence as a truth. Three of these were utterly ruined, as you shall hear in the following discourse, the fourth being a very wise man, contented himself with a mean place that was worthy of a much greater. Although very active formerly, called to mind no meddling with no state business, his wisdom foretelling his fate if he had done otherwise; for he did see one better head-piece than his own, sit tottering at that time, and fell off afterwards, which made him think it was good sleeping in a whole skin.

The King no sooner came to London, but notice was taken of a rising favourite, the first meteor of that nature appearing in British climate. The King cast his eye upon him for affection, so did all the Courtiers adore him and his name was Mr. James Hay. This extravagant man in one of his pompous entrees into Paris had his "horse's shoes made of silver" to which King James created him Lord Hay. His next title was that of Viscount Doncaster, and then Earl Carlisle. His love of dress was so great, that it continued to the last moment of his life when he knew he was given over by his physicians and abstracting him from his vanity. Wilson says he was "a complete gentleman, and of great bounty." He died October 15, 1600.

Hay, coming over to meet the King, and share with him in his new conquest (according to the Scottish phrase) it should seem had some former acquaintance with the then Ambassador in Scotland for the French King, who coming with his Majesty into England, presented him, as a well accomplished gentleman, in such a high commendation as engendered such a liking as produced a favourite. In this thankful acknowledgment he did him many fair offices for the present, and coming afterwards an extraordinary Ambassador to our King, made him the most sumptuous feast at Essex house that ever was seen before and never equaled since in which was such plenty as fish of that immensity brought out of Muscovia; dishes were made to contain them (no dishes in all England before could never hold them) and after that a costly Voydee, and after that a Masque of choice noblemen and gentlemen, and after that a most

costly and magnificent banquet where the King, Lords, and all the prime gentlemen then about London were being invited. Truly, he was a most complete and well accomplished gentleman: modest and Court-like, and of so fair a demeanour as made him be generally beloved; and for his wisdom, I shall give you but one character for all: he was ever great with all the favourites of his time, and although the King did often change, yet he was *semper eidem* [always the same] with the King and favourites getting by both; for although favourites had that exorbitant power over the King to make him grace and disgrace whom they pleased, he was out of that power and the only exception to that general rule. For his gettings, it was more than almost all the favourites of his time, which appeared in those vast expenses of all sorts, and had not the bounty of his mind exceeded his gettings, he might have left the greatest estate that ever our age or climate had heard of for he was indeed made for a Courtier, who wholly studied his Master, and understood him better than any other.

Hay was employed in very many of the most weighty affairs, and sent with the most stately Embassies of our times which he performed with that wisdom and magnificence that he seemed an honour to his King and country toward his carriage in state affairs. He was termed by some Princes “the King’s Juggler” and married the daughter and heir of the Lord Denny, after the Earl of Northumberland’s daughter, who was hated of none that ever I heard of; but Northampton, who had no patience to see him, being himself of so venomous and cankered [cancer] a disposition that indeed he hated all men of noble parts, nor loved any but flatterers like himself. It was a greater question whether he hated the Earl of Carlile, or Sir Robert Mansel most by whom he had been heard to say: “Body of God, I will be content to be damned perpetually in hell, to be revenged of that proud Welshman.” And did so hate him, that he kept an Inquisition on him seven years to prove that he had cozened [tricked] the King of £14,000, which at seven years end at a hearing before the King, Lords, Queen and all the Ladies being present with all the gallantry of the Court, ended in one pair of silk stockings given by one for a New Year gift to Master Wels, Sir Robert Mansels’ servant, at which the King stood up, and swore very deeply: “Do you believe I will take a pair of silk stocking for my £14,000? Give me that; is this all the fruit of seven years commission?” Which words Mansel kneeled down, and said, “I will now, Sir, take all the faults they can charge my servant with upon myself;” at which the King was very angry that so noble a gentleman, who had so well acquitted himself upon the honour he entrusted it in the keeping of such a servant. At the end, Cecil kneeled

down and said “Sir, if you will suffer malice so far to prevail, as to have your honest servants traduced, to satisfy the humours of any: I beseech you take my staff, for were myself, and the Earl of Worcester here present, put in the balance against Sir Robert Mansel, we should prove too light; I am in a great place and cannot say, but by myself I may fail, yet not with our own wills; therefore, Sir, if you will suffer such inquisition there will be no serving your Majesty in such places as I hold, by your Majesty’s favour.” And so ended the Earl of Northampton’s malice, which only served to honour Mansel, and make a scorn of himself, and this only to make the venom of this monster appear who did flatter the King and dissemble with God.

And now began Ambassadors to appear from divers Princes; the prime of those was Roney, Duke of Sullia (coming from the French King), the Constable of Castile (coming from the Spanish King), the Count of Arremberg (coming from the Arch Duke). The former came to congratulate only and desired the confirmation of the ancient amity between the two crowns, the other two came about establishing a firm peace between these two Kingdoms that had lived in perpetual war and hatred of each other. It might appear where the advantage of such a peace might fail by those that sought or rather bought it with an infinite mass of treasure, prodigally cast about the English Court.

To bring these Ambassadors over, two appointed persons were used, Sir Robert Mansel, Vice-Admiral of the narrow seas, and Sir Jerome Turner his Vice-Admiral; the first commanded to attend at Graveling for the Spanish Ambassador, the latter at Calais for the French, but the French coming first and hearing the Vice-Admiral was to attend him, the Admiral, in scorn, put himself on a passage boat of Calais and came forth with flag on top. Instantly, Turner sent to know of the Admiral what he should do; Mansel sent him word to shoot and strike him, if he would not take in the flag; this, as it made the flag be pulled in, so a great complaint was believed it would have undone Mansel, the French faction put it so home; but he maintained the act, and was the better beloved of his Master ever after to his dying day. This makes it appear how jealous old commanders were of their honour, the King and Kingdoms, which since had been so prodigally wasted, as we are utterly bankrupt having spent our old stock and not bravery enough to erect anew.

The Constable of Calais so played his Master’s business (in which he spared for no cost) that he procured a peace so advantageous for Spain and so disadvantageous for England, that it and all Christendom have since both seen and felt the lamentable effect thereof.

There was not one Courtier of note that tasted not of Spain's bounty, either in gold or jewels, and among them not any in so large a proportion as the Countess of Suffolk who shared in her Lord's interest, being then a potent man, and in that interest which she had in being Mistress to that little great Secretary [Robert Cecil] (little in body and stature, but great in wit and policy) the sole manager of state affairs. So it may be said, she was a double sharer, and in truth *Audley end*, that famous and great structure had its foundation of Spanish gold.

The King was a peaceable and merciful Prince (yet God for some secret intent best known to himself) laid the foundation of his Reign with the greatest mortality ever before heard of in this Kingdom by a fearful plague, and some by that judged what his future Reign would be; yet their wisdom failed for he was a King of mercy as well as peace, never cruel, yet surely it had some moral. He was forced by that contagion to leave the Metropolis and go into a corner in Wiltshire, Wilton, the Earl of Pembroke's house, in which time of his abode there a kind of treason broke, but what it was as no man could then tell; so it is left with so dark a comment that posterity will never understand the text or remember any such treason. It is true some lost their lives, yet the world was never satisfied of the justice and one of them, (and that the only mark of tyranny of this good King's Reign) executed many years after without all president and on my conscience without any just cause, and even against that good King's will, who in many things was overawed by his numerous disposition.

But the Spanish faction and Spanish gold betrayed his life, as they had done the Kingdoms before. I believe it was one of the greatest masterpieces of that Ambassador Gundamor, to purchase Raleigh's head, yet had not Bristol cooperated, the King would never have consented and it may be he had his secret ends, tearing his wisdom might once again have raised him to have looked over Sherborne Castle, once his own, and how unjustly taken from him, God will one day judge. I know not whether there be a curse on those that are owners of it, as fables report, but I am confident there is a curse on Bristol for taking away his life. I will not take upon me too far to pray into God's Ark, yet what is like to befall him, and has already, his son (as hopeful a gentleman as any in the Kingdom) may give some token of God's anger against him and his family.

But because I will not leave you altogether blindfolded, I shall as near as I can lead you to the discovery of this treason which consisted of Protestants, Puritans, Papists, and Atheists:

a strange medley you will say to meet in one and the same treason and keep counsel, which surely they did, because they knew not of any.

The Protestants were the Lord Cobham and George Brook his brother, the one very learned and wise, the other a most silly Lord. The Puritan was the Lord Grey of Wilton, a very hopeful gentleman blasted in the very bud. The Papists were Watson and Clarke both priests and there was Parham a gentleman. The Atheist was Sir Walter Raleigh then generally so believed, though after brought by affliction (the best School Mistress) to be and so died a most religious gentleman.

This treason was compounded of most strange ingredients (and more strange than truth) it was very true, most of these were discontented to see Cecil their old friend so high to trample on them, that before had been his chief supporters (and being ever of his faction) now neglected and contemned; it was then believed an errand trick of state to overthrow some and disable others, knowing their strong abilities might otherwise live to overthrow Cecil, for they were intimate in all his secret councils for the ruin of Essex, especially Raleigh, Grey, and Cobham even though the latter was a fool though he had been very useful to them (as the tool in the hand of the workman) to have singled out these without some priests, which were traitors by the law, had smelt too rank and appeared too poor and played a trick of state.

Cecil in this had a double benefit. First, in ridding himself of such as he feared would have been thorns in his sides. Second, by endearing himself to the King by showing his diligence and vigilance for his safety, so that it might be said of him as of Cæsar in another case, *Inveniam aut faciam*, [I will either find out a treason or make one], and this had been a pretty trick had it been only to disgrace without taking away life. But how this piece of policy may stand with religion, I hear by this time he too well understands and this plot as near as I can tell you (and I dare say my intelligence gave me as near a guess as ever any man had) was that all these in a discontented humour had by Watson and Clark (being confessors) dealt with Count Aremberge, the Arch Duke's Ambassador, to negotiate with the Arch Duke to raise an Army and invade England. They would raise another of Papists and male contents to join.

You must understand the King was believed an errand Puritan; how likely this plot was, let the world judge. The King of Spain, who had bought peace at so dear a rate and found it so advantageous to him by the lamentable experience he had formerly in the wars with this formidable state, should seek to break it so soon; and had it been a real treason the state had

been bound to have rewarded these traitors as the best piece of service done in England all that King's Reign. It was indeed those that made the peace, not those that endeavoured the breaking of it, who were the traitors and are to be cursed by all posterity. Yet this foolish plot served well enough to take some blocks out of the way that might afterwards have made some of them stumble to the breaking of their own necks. They were all arraigned of treason at Winchester, whither the King sent some secretly to observe all passages upon whose true and faithful relations of the innocence of the persons arraigned, and slight proof upon which they were condemned. James would not be drawn to sign any warrant for the execution of Raleigh, Cobham, and Grey; very hardly for any of the rest, the two priests excepted.

For Raleigh's defense, it was so brave and just as (had he not willfully cast himself out of very weariness, as unwilling to detain the company longer) no jury could ever have cast him; and the evidence brought against him was Cobham's accusation, which he only desired might appear (*viva voce*) and he would yield without further defense, but that they knew full well Cobham would not, nor could not accuse him, having been tampered with by Waad who was then Lieutenant of the Tower being Cecil's great creature. Waad desired it under his hand that also he refused; at last Waad got a trick by his cunning, to surprise Cobham's weakness, to get him to write his name to a blank paper, to which there is no question Waad wrote the accusation as will appear hereafter.

Cecil urged Raleigh often if Cobham had accused him under his hand and would he then yield. Raleigh replied that he knew Cobham weak of judgment and did not know how that weakness might be wrought upon, but was confident he would not to his face accuse him, and therefore would not put his fortune and all on that, at which fence he stood till nine at night: at least his fate carried him against his reason and he yielded upon the producing his hand which was instantly pulled out but not his act or deed. So at that present was George Brooke, Watson, and Clarke executed; Parham was acquitted and Raleigh executed many years after for the same treason, as much against all reason as all or any president.

Yea, after he had been a General by the Kings Commission, and had by that power of the lives of many others, utterly against the Civil law which he said he that hath power of the life of other ought to be Master of his own. But the Spaniard was so powerful at that time at Court, as that faction could command the life of any man that might prove dangerous to their designs. Grey and Cobham died in their restraint, the one much pitied, the other scorned and

his death as base for he died lousy for want of apparel and linen; he had starved, had not a trencher-scraper and some time his servant in Court relieved him with scraps, in whose house he died, being so poor a house as he was forced to creep up a ladder into a little hole to his chamber. It was a strange judgment and unprecedented, that a man of £7,000 per annum and of a personal estate of £30,000 of all which the King was cheated, of what should escheated to him, that he could not give him any maintenance, as in all cases the King did, unless out of his own revenue, which was the occasion of this Lord's want, (his wife being very rich, would not give him the crumbs that fell from her table) and this was a just judgment of God on him; and now, because it will be pertinent in this place to let you understand that Raleigh had his life surreptitiously taken away, I shall give you a true story.

Queen Anne, [James's wife] that brave Princess, was in a desperate and believed incurable disease, whereof the physicians were at the furthest end of their studies to find the cause. At a non plus for the cure, Raleigh, being by his long studies an admirable chemist, undertook and performed the cure for which he would receive no other reward but that her Majesty would procure that certain Lords might be sent to examine Cobham, whether he had accused Raleigh of treason at any time under his hand.

The King [James] at the Queen's ²¹ request (and in justice could do no less) sends six Lords: the Duke of Lenox, Cecil, Worcester, Suffolk, Carew, and Cæsar ²² to demand of Cobham whether he had not under his hand accused Raleigh at Winchester upon that treason he was arraigned for. Cobham did protest never, nor could he, but said: "That villain Waad did often solicit me, and not prevailing, got me by a trick to write my name upon a piece of white paper, which I thinking nothing did so that if any charge came under my hand it was forged by that villain Waad, by writing something above my hand without my consent or knowledge."

These six, returning to the King, made Cecil their spokesman, who said, "Sir, my Lord Cobham hath made good all that ever he wrote or said." And this was an equivocating trick, for

²¹ That James's wife, Queen Anne of Denmark, really favoured Raleigh appeared from the fruitless interference which she used in his behalf by the following letter addressed to Buckingham, found in Cayley's *Life of Raleigh*, Vol. II, p. 156, 1806: "My kind Dogge, if I have any power or credit with you, I pray you let me have a trial of it at this time, in dealing sincerely and earnestly with the King, that Sir Walter Raleigh's life may not be called in question. If you do it, so that the success answer my expectation, assure yourself that I will take it extraordinary kindly at your hands; and rest one that wisheth you well, and desires you to continue still as you have been, a true servant to your Master. To the Marquis of Buckingham."

²² Sir Julius Cæsar died April 18, 1630, and was buried in Great St. Helen's Church near Bishopsgate, London.

it was true, he made good whatever he writ, but never wrote anything to accuse Raleigh; by which you see the baseness of these Lords, the credulity of the King, and the ruin of Raleigh. I appeal now to the judgment of the entire world, whether these six Lords were not the immediate murderers, and no question shall be called to a sad account for it. And thus have you a true relation of the treason and traitors, with all the windings and turnings in it, and all passages appertaining to it; and by it, you may see the bravery these great men were enslaved in by Cecil, none dared testify such a truth, as the not testifying, lost their most precious souls.

And now the King returns to Windsor, where there was an apparition [appearance] of Southampton being a favourite to his Majesty, by that privacy and dearness presented to the Court view, but Cecil liking not that any of Essex his faction should come into play, made that apparition appear as it were in *transitu*, and so vanished, by putting some jealousy that he did not much desire to be in his Queen's company, yet love and regality must admit of no partnership. Then was there in requital of the Spanish Ambassadors two stately Embassies addressed the one to Spain and the other to the Arch Duke, to have that peace they so dearly purchased confirmed, and sworn to by ours, as formerly by them; the old Lord Admiral [Howard, Earl of Nottingham] ²³ was sent to Spain, the Earl of Hartford for Brussels that the Duke of Lenox might have the better opportunity. The Spaniard was astonished at the braveness of our Embassy, and the handsome gentlemen (in both which few Embassies ever equaled this) for you must understand the Jesuits reported our nation to be ugly and like devils, as a punishment sent to our nation for casting off the Pope's supremacy; and they pictured Sir Francis Drake generally half a man, half a dragon. When they beheld them after the shape of angels, they could not well tell whether to trust their own eyes or their confessor's reports, yet they then appeared to them, as to the entire world, monstrous liars.

The Ambassador had his reception with as much state as his entertainment with bounty, the King defraying all charges, and they were detained at their landing longer than ordinary to have provisions prepared in their passage to Madrid, with all the bounty was possible to make the whole country appear a land of Canaan, which was in truth but a wilderness. In their abode there, although they gave them roast meat, yet they beat them with the spits, by reporting that

²³ In Winwood's *Memorials*, Vol. II, p. 52, there is a particular account of his Embassy in the second volume of Somers' *Tracts*, second edition, by Treswal, Somerset Herald. The expedition did not escape the lash of popular satire; for Stone, a jester, celebrated by Ben Jonson in *Volpone*, was soundly whipped for saying "that there went sixty fools into Spain, besides my Lord Admiral and his two sons."

the English did steal all the plate, when in truth it was themselves who thought to make hay while the sun shined not thinking ever more to come to such a feast, to fill their purses as well as their bellies (for food and coin are equally alike scarce with that nation) this report passed for currant, to the infinite dishonour of our nation, there being at that time the prime gallantry of our nation.

Mansel, who was a man born to vindicate the honour of his nation as his own, being Vice-Admiral and a man on whom the old Admiral wholly relied, having dispatched the ships to be gone the next morning came in very late to supper; Sir Richard Levison sitting at the upper end of the table among the Grantees, the Admiral himself not supping that night, being upon the dispatch of letters, the table upon Mansel's entrance offered to rise to give him place, but he sat down instantly at the lower end, and would not let any man stir, and falling to his meat did spy a Spaniard as the dishes emptied ever putting some in his bosom, some in his breeches, that they both strutted. Mansel sent a message to the upper end of the table to Levison to be delivered in his ear, that whatsoever he saw him do, he should desire the gentlemen and Grantees to sit quiet, for there should be no cause of any disquiet; on the sudden Mansel steps up, takes this Spaniard in his arms, at which the table began to rise; Levison quiets them, brings him up to the end amongst the Grantees, then pulls out the plate from his bosom, breeches, and every part about him, which did so amaze the Spaniard and vindicate that aspersion cast on our nation, that never after was there any syllable heard, but all honour done to the nation and all thanks to him in particular.

From there, next day they went for Madrid, where all the royal entertainment Spain could yield was given them, and at the end of the grand entertainment and revels, which held most part of the night; as they were all returning to their lodgings, the street being made light by white wax lights, and the very night forced into a day by shining light as they were passing in the street, a Spaniard catches Mansel's hat, with a very rich jewel in it, and away he flies; Mansel not being of a spirit to have anything violently taken from him, nor of such a Court-like complement to part with a jewel of that price to one no better acquainted with him, hurls open the boot, follows after the fellow, and some three gentlemen did follow him to secure him, take the fellow in the house of an Alguarell, which is a great officer or judge in Spain; this officer wondering at the manner of their coming, the one with his hat and sword in his hand, the other with all their swords, demands the cause. They tell him surely none can think his house a

sanctuary which is to punish such offenders; but Mansel would not be so put off with the Spaniard's gravity, but enters the house leaving two at the gate to see that none should come out while he searched.

A long time they could find nothing, and the Algnarel urging this as an affront, at last looking down into a well of a small depth he saw the fellow stand up to the neck in water; Mansel seized on him, hat and jewel, leaving the fellow to the Algnarel, but he had much rather have fingered the jewel and his gravity told Mansel he could not have it without form of law, which Mansel dispensed with carrying away his hat and jewel and never heard further of the business.

Now the truth was, the fellow knew his Borough well enough, as well as some thieves of our nation after they have one a robbery would put themselves into a prison of their acquaintance, assuring themselves none would search there; or rather as our Records of London, whose chief revenue for themselves and servants is from thieves, whores, and bawds, therefore this story cannot seem strange in England.

The other Ambassador sent to the Arch Duke wall, the old Earl of Hertford, who was conveyed over by one of the King's ships by Sir William Monson in whose passage a Dutch man of war coming by that ship, would not veil, as the manner is, acknowledging by that our sovereignty over the sea, Monson gave him a shot to instruct him manners, but instead of bearing, he taught him by returning another, he acknowledged no such sovereignty, this was the very first indignity and affront ever offered to the royal ships of England which since have been most frequent.

Monson desired Lord of Hertford to go into the hold, and he would instruct him by stripes, that refused to be taught by fair means; but the Earl charged him on his allegiance first to land him, on whom he was appointed to attend; so to his great regret, he was forced to endure that indignity, for which I have often heard him wish he had been hanged, rather than live that unfortunate Commander of a King's ship to be chronicled for the first that ever endured that affront, although it was not in his power to have helped it; yet by his favour, it appeared but a copy of his countenance for it had been but hazarding hanging to have disobeyed the Lord's commandment, and it had been infinite odds he had not been hanged, having to friend him, the house of Suffolk; nor would he have been so sensible of it, had he not been of the Spanish faction and that a Dutch ship.

Now did these great managers of the state (of which Cecil was chief) after they had packed the Lords begin to deal the government of the Kingdom among themselves, and persuaded the King to leave the state affairs to them, and to betake himself to some country recreations, which they found him addicted to, for the city and business did not agree with him; to that end purchased, built, and repaired at New-market and Royston, and this pleased the King's humour well, rather that he might enjoy his favourite with more privacy, than that he loved the sport; then must Theobalds be in his own possession, as not fit for a King to be beholding to a subject for a house of daily use, but because the King had so much want of money to express his love and bounty to his native nation, Cecil would exchange and made such an advantage, that he sold his house for a fifty year purchase, and that so cunningly as hardly to be discerned, but by a curious sight, for he fleted off the cream of the King's manor in many counties, not any two lying in anyone county, and made choice of the most in the remotest counties, only built his nest at Hatfield within the county where his father had built his, yet he still kept the house of Theobalds for he and his posterity were to be perpetual keepers of the house and parks adjacent; by this he not only showed his wisdom for his own benefit, but to the world (what the King's natural disposition was) to be easily abused, and would take counterfeit coin for current payment.



James about to take assay
of the deer

And to fit the King's humour and dissolve him in that delight he was most addicted to, as well as to serve Cecil's own ends, and satisfy his revenge upon some neighbouring gentlemen, that formerly would not sell him some convenient parcels of land neighbouring on Theobalds, he puts the King on enlarging the park, walling, and storing it with red deer; and I dare affirm, with that work he was so well pleased, and did more glory in than his predecessors did in the conquest of France; and as it was most true, so an ill omen, that the

King loved beasts better than he did men, and took more delight in them and was more over the life of a stag than of a man; yet this was the weakness of his judgment and poorness of his spirit, rather than any innate cruelty, for he was not naturally

cruel over lives,²⁴ though in displacing officers, which naturally he did believe, was as glorious as to overthrow and conquer Kings.

For all the King's men in setting cards, and playing games to their own advantages, of getting much for themselves and friends, there was one knave in the pack, who would speak against their designs, and trump in their way, if he might not share with them in their winning; that was one Lake (Clerk of the Signet) and after that turned out in disgrace; and in truth, was only wise in the worlds' opinion who could swim being held up by the chin; but at his fall all his weaknesses were discovered, and that the world had been deceived in him, where one particular amongst many shall give full assurance; being in disgrace, he gave £2,000 to kiss the King's hand, believing that after that he might have access as formerly; after he had paid his money he was never allowed to see the King anymore, only jeered at by all the Court for his folly, and went sneaking up and down contemned of all men.

Lake was a Fellow of mean birth and meaner breeding, being an under servant to make fires in Secretary Walsingham's chamber, and there got some experience, which afterwards in the King's time made him appear an able man, which in the Queen's time, when there was none in Court but men of eminences, made him an inconsiderable fellow. He had linked himself in with the Scottish Nation, pronging for suits, and helping them to fill their purses; as they did believe, there was not so able a man in the Kingdom, for in truth ever since Elizabeth's death, the raising of money had been the only war to raise men, as being held the essential property of a wise man, to know how to bring in money, he wholly applied himself to those of the bed-chamber and of nearest access to James.

For Lake's good service of abusing his country and countrymen, he was made Clerk of the Signet to wait on the King in his hunting journeys, and in these journeys got all the bills signed even for the greatest Lords (all packets being addressed to him) so that even Robert Cecil and Northampton together with the greatest Lords, made court to him. By this means did

²⁴ Scaliger makes a similar observation: "James the First was merciful, except at the chase, where he was cruel and very angry when he could not catch the stag: 'God', he said, 'is enraged against me' and when he caught him, he would put his arm entirely into the belly and entrails of the beast." The learned Scaliger was probably ignorant that this practice was the taking the assay of the stag. "The deer," says Turberville (*The Noble Art of Venerie*, 1611) "being laid upon his back, the Prince chief or such as they shall appoint, comes to it, and the chief huntsman kneeling, if it be to a Prince, doth hold the deer by the forefoot, while the Prince or Chief cut a slit, drawn along the brisket of the deer, somewhat lower than the brisket towards the belly. This is done to see the goodness of the flesh, and how thick it is."

Lake raise himself from a mean to a great fortune, but so overawed by his wife, that if he did not do what she commanded, she would beat him, and in truth his wife was afterwards his overthrow; besides, he would tell tales and let the King know the passages of Court and great men, as who was Cecil's mistress [Countess of Suffolk] and governed all who governed Northampton and discovered the Bawdry, which did infinitely please James's humour. There was so much craft in his story telling, as he served his turn upon all, but was engrossed by none but by the bed-chamber, who stuck so close to him, that they could not yet remove him.

And now do the English faction (seeing they could never sever the Scots from him) endeavour to raise a mutiny against the Scot that were his supporters, their agents divulging everywhere, the Scots would get all and would beggar the Kingdom; the Scots on the other side complain to the King, they were so poor, they underwent the by-word of beggarly Scots to which the King returned this answer (as he had a very ready wit) "content yourselves, I will shortly make the English as beggarly as you" and so ended that controversy; this is as true as he truly performed it, for however he enriched many, in particular Cecil, Suffolk, Northampton, Worcester, and Lake, yet he did beggar himself and the nation in general.

This also was inculcated into the ears of Parliament when that great business about the Union was in debate, which was much crossed by that opinion; if he had already impoverished the Kingdom by the Union, they would bankrupt it. But since you see by their own valour and bravery of spirit they have made us beg a reunion with them, and for ought we to see, all our happiness is derived from their favours.

They that lived at Court, and were curious observers of every man's actions, could have then affirmed that Cecil, Suffolk and Northampton and their friends did get more than the whole nation of Scotland (Dunbar excepted) for whatever others got they spent here, only Dunbar laid a foundation of a great family which did all revert into England again with his daughter's marriage with the House of Suffolk, so in truth, all the water run to their mills.

It is most true that many Scots did get much, but not more with one hand than they spent with the other, witness the Earl of Kelley, Annundale, and Nay, that great getter, the Earl of Carlisle also and some private gentlemen as Gideon Murrey, John Achmoty, James Bailly, John Gib, and Barnard Lindley, got some pretty estate not worthy either the naming or enjoying. Old servants should get some moderate estates to leave to posterity. But these and all the Scots in general got scarce the Tythe of those English getters, that can be said did stick by

them or their posterity; besides, Cecil had one trick to get the kernel, and leave the Scots but the shell, yet cast all the envy on them. He would make them buy books of fee-farms, some £100 per annum, some 100 Marks and he would compound with them for a £1,000, which they were willing to embrace, because they were sure to have them pass without any control or charge and £1,000 appeared to them that never saw £10 before, an inexhaustible treasure; then would Cecil fill up this book with such prime land, as should be worth £10,000 or £20,000, which was easy for him being Treasurer to do; and by this means Cecil enriched himself infinitely, yet cast the envy on the Scots, in whose names these books appeared, and are still upon record to all posterity; though Cecil had the honey, they poor gentlemen but part of the wax; Dunbar only had his agents, and could play his own game, which they dared not cross; so was the poor King and state cheated on all hands.

And now did a contention arise between the English and Scots, about the election of a favourite, out of whether nation he should come; now was Montgomery in the wane, being given more to his own pleasures than to observe the King, so that always the Earl of Carlisle did invest him in his room; he as soon by his neglective carriage did divest himself, yet was he ever in the King's good opinion and one that he put more trust in at that time of his death, than in all his other servants.



Robert Carr First Earl of Somerset
(1590–1645)

There was a young gentleman, Master Robert Carr, who had been in France and was newly returned from travel. He was very handsome, well bred, and one that was observed to spend his time in serious studies, accompany himself with the men of eminence. He acquainted himself with Sir Thomas Overbury, accidentally meeting King James. Lord how the great men flocked then to see him and to offer to his shrine in such abundance that the King was forced to lay a restraint lest it might retard his recovery by spending his spirits and to facilitate the cure. Care was taken for a choice diet for him and chirurgions [surgeons] with his attendants.

No sooner recovered Carr was proclaimed favourite. Then the English Lords, who formerly coveted an English favourite (and to that end the Countess of Suffolk did look out choice young men whom she daily curled, and perfumed their breaths) left all hope and she her curling and perfuming, all adoring this rising sun, every man striving to invest himself into this man's favour (not sparing for bounty nor flattery) which was not hard to be obtained being naturally more addicted to the English than to the Scotch in so much that he endeavoured to forget his native country, and his father's house, having none of note about him but English, and but one besides English in any familiarity with him, which was Sir Robert Carr his Kinsman; but above all was Overbury, his Pythias, then was the strife between Cecil and Suffolk: who should engross him, and make him their monopoly each presenting, proffering, and accumulating favours upon Overbury's kindred, the father made a judge in Wales and himself offered an office, but Overbury, naturally of an insolent spirit which was elevated by being so intimate with a favourite, and wholly having engrossed that commodity which could not be retailed, but him and his favour; with a kind of scorn neglected their friendships, yet made use of both.



Sir Thomas Overbury
(1581–1616)

Carr was eventually Knighted, made Gentleman of the King's bed-chamber, then created Viscount Rochester. Northampton finding himself neglected by so mean a fellow, cast about another way, and followed Balaams' council by sending a Moabitish woman to him, in which he made use of Copinger, a gentleman, who had spent a fair fortune left by his ancestors, and now for maintenance, was forced to lead the life of a serving man, (that formerly kept many to serve him) and as an addition, the worst of that kind a flat bawd.

Copinger had lived a scandalous life, by keeping a whore of his own, which for the honour of her family I will not name; therefore was fittest to trade in that commodity for another, and in truth was fit to take any impression baseness could stamp on him, as the sequel of this story will manifest. This Moabitish woman was a daughter of the Earl of Suffolk married to a young noble gentleman, the Earl of Essex. This train took, and the first private

meetings were at Copinger's house, and himself bawd to their lust, which put him into a far greater bravery for a time than when he was Master of his own, but it had bitterness on all hands in the end. This privacy in their stolen pleasures made Copinger a friend to Northampton and Suffolk, though but a servant to Rochester, for so now was he called, and now had they linked him so close as no breaking from them.

Overbury was that John Baptist that reproved the Lord for the sin of using the Lady, and abusing the young Earl of Essex. He would call her strumpet, her mother and brother bawds, and used them with so much scorn, as in truth was but to be endured by a fellow of his rank to persons of that quality, how faulty so ever otherwise they were. Then to satisfy Overbury, and blot out the name of sin, his love led him into a more desperate way by a resolution to marry another man's wife, against this then did Overbury bellow louder, and in it showed himself more like an affectionate than a discreet and moderate friend: had he compounded but one dram of discretion with an ounce of affection, he might with such a receipt have preserved his own life, and their fortunes and honours. For those that infinitely hated that family, did he infinitely condemn his insolent carriage, and behaviour towards them; so that had any of those brothers, or name, killed Overbury either by picking a quarrel with him, or pistolling him, or any other desperate way, or bravely in a duel, upon some other ground of a quarrel, then blemishing their sister, the world would have justified the action. However, he had stood with God; but Buchanan's character of that family bars all expectation of bravery of spirit; but a Counsel must be held, to put him to death by some baser means.

The plot then must be: Overbury must be sent as a Ledger Ambassador ²⁵ into France, which by obeying, they should be rid of so great an eye-sore; by disobeying, he incurred the displeasure of his Prince; a contempt, that he could not expect less than imprisonment for, and by that means be sequestered from his friends. And thus far I do believe the Earl of Somerset (for so was he now created) was consenting; this stratagem [trick, plot] took, and Overbury indeed made the worst choice, it could not be thought, but such an employment was far above his desert, and much better for him to have accepted, than to be confined to a loathsome prison and for want of judgment. Had his suffering been less than loss of life, he had not been worthy of pity. So to the Tower he went from whence he never returned, rather than accept an

²⁵ It seems that the destination of Overbury's intended Embassy was to Russia; and many reasons may be assigned for his declining the employment under the latter supposition.

honourable employment from whence he might not only have returned, but done his friends acceptable service, either in private or public.

In Somerset's managing of this business (that wisdom which formerly he had been esteemed for) suffered under the censure of wise men, as well as fools. Having Overbury now fast in prison, Herodias by pleasing her Herod must also ask and have his life. To that end they preferred Emposides to be servant to Sir Gervase Elwaies, then Lieutenant of the Tower, this gentleman was ever held wise and honest, but unfortunate in having that place thrust upon him without his thought; he was also so religious as few in the Court did equal him; so wise, as he obtained that character of wise Elwaies, yet neither could his wisdom nor the opinion of his religion and honesty prevent that fate. He was so ignorant of the plot as he never dreamt of any such matter until one day, as it should seem, Weston being told, Elwaies did know wherefore he was preferred unto him to wait on Overbury; he asked the Lieutenant, whether he should now do it, Elwaies asked him, "what?" Weston at that being somewhat abashed, Elwaies spied it, presently said, "no not yet;" for he did believe there was something known to Weston; instantly he hasted away (being a little before dinner) and went into his study, sent for Weston to come unto him, examining him of the meaning of that question; at last by fair means and threatening together got the truth; then Elwaies, as he well could, laid before Weston the horridness of the fact and torments of hell, and the un-assurance of his momentary enjoying of either reward or favour after the fact done, but that it must follow, so many personages of honour would never cabinet such a secret in his breast that might ruin them; at last made him so sensible of his danger in this life, but more sensible of the torments in the other, that Weston falling on his knees said: "Lord, how good and gracious art thou, and thy mercy is above all thy work, for this day is salvation come to my soul, and I would not for all the world have had such a sin upon me." Weston, giving the Lieutenant humble thanks that had been the instrument of saving his soul by putting him off from so foul intentions. The Lieutenant having now thus renewed grace in him by making him as he thought a new man. "Thou and I have a dangerous part to act, yet be honest and true to me, and I doubt not, but with God's help, we shall perform it well, both before God and the world."

Weston faithfully promised him, and for a long time as faithfully performed with him the Lieutenant willed him to bring all such things as were sent him to give Overbury unto him, which he accordingly did; the Lieutenant ever gave [poison] to cats and dogs, which he ever

had ready in his study for that purpose; some died presently, some lay lingering a long time, all which with the jelly and tarts sent to Overbury he cast into his privy, they distaining the very dishes. This continued long, the Earl ever sending to visit Overbury, assuring him he did not forget his release, which should not be long deferred, wherein most men did verily believe he meant both nobly and truly, though others conjectured his meaning was a dissolution. At last the Countess sent for Weston, reviling him, and calling him a treacherous villain, for had he given those things sent, he [Overbury] had not been now alive; vowing she would be revenged on him; upon the very fear whereof he after gave those poisons sent, without acquainting the Lieutenant; yet for all this schooling of Weston, and his assurance given of his future fidelity to the Countess, she would not trust him single anymore, but put another co-adjustor to him, one Franklin, an eerie villain than Weston, and truly they may be deemed very ill that could seek out such instruments.

These two villains [Franklin and Weston] came into Overbury's chamber and found him in infinite torment, with contention between the strength of nature, and the working of the poison, and it being very like nature had gotten the better in that contention, by the thrusting out of boils, botches, and blains, they fearing it might come to light upon the judgment of physicians, that foul play had been offered him, consented to stifle him with the bed clothes, which accordingly was performed, and so ended his miserable life with the assurance of the conspirators, that he died by poison; none thinking otherwise, but these two murderers.

Now was all, as they believed, quiet and in the depth of security, and the Earl and Countess began to carry their loves more openly and impudently, so that the world did talk very loudly and broadly of this adulterous meeting. It must from that ground proceed to an adulterous marriage, as well to the wronging a young nobleman, as to the dishonour and shame of themselves, but they must need go the Devil's drives: yet know not how, handsomely to effect this, but by making the King a part in this bawdy business, which was no hard matter.

The King's eye began to wander after a new favourite, being satiated with the old; therefore for the bringing this bawdry to a marriage, the Bishops must be principal actors (as I know not in what bad action they would not be lookers on) and the Bishop of Winchester, an excellent civilian and a very great scholar, must be the principal, for which his son was Knighted and will never lose that title of Sir Nullity Bilson. For by a nullity of the first marriage, must this second take place; many meetings of the Bishops and the prime civilians in

which there wanted no bribes from the Lord, Lady and their friends, to have this nullity brought to pass, wherein the discourse would have better befitted the months of bawds and ruffians, than the grave divines; among them Bishop Neale, then Bishop of Rochester, a creature and favourite of the House of Suffolk, took up a learned discourse in the science of bawdery; how many degrees in that science must produce a nullity, wherein were so many beastly expressions as for modesty sake, I will not recite them, being offensive to my very thoughts and memory. Aristotle's *Problems* was a modest discourse to his, and he appeared to be better studied in that than in divinity, and to wind up his learned discourse, concluded, all those met in this Lord and Lady.

The Arch Bishop of Canterbury Abbot, to his everlasting fame, mainly opposed all the proceedings and protested against them, for which he ever after lived in disgrace, was excluded from the Council Table and died in the disgrace of the King on earth, though in favour with the King of Kings.

Yet forsooth to make up the full measure of bawdry, and to justify Neale's discourse that all things in the former marriage conduced to a nullity, a search must be made to find whether there had been a penetration and a jury of grave matrons were found fit for that purpose who with their spectacles, ground to lesson, not to make the letter larger; after their inspection gave verdict she was *intacto vergo* [virgin intact] which was thought very strange, for the world took notice that her way was very near beaten so plain, as if *regia via* and in truth, was a common way before Somerset did ever travel that way; besides, the world took notice they two long had lived in adultery, yet had old kettle a trick for that also.

The Lady of Essex, for modesty sake, makes humble suit to the reverend bawdy Bishops (who were also plotters in this stratagem) that she might not appear bare-faced for blushing; but desired to come veiled with a taffeta over her face. This by all means was thought so reasonable, for a pretty modest Lady, that the bawdy Bishops and per-blind Ladies, which had forgotten modesty themselves, could not think it worthy the denial.

One Mistress Fines, near Kinswoman to the old kettle, was dressed up in the Countesses clothes, at that time too young to be other than *virgo intacta* though within two years after had the old ladies made their inspection, the orifice would not have appeared so small to have delivered such a verdict as they did and a just one upon their view; though upon some of their knowledge it was not that Lady they were to give verdict upon; if any make

doubt of the truth of this story the author delivers upon the reputation of a gentleman he had it *verbatim* from a Knight, (otherwise of much honour though the very dependency on that family may question it) which did usher the Lady into the place of inspection, and had told it often to his friends in mirth.²⁶

Now is the nullity pronounced and the marriage with Somerset with speed solemnized, for which they and the whole family of Suffolk paid dear in after time, and had sour sauce to that sweat meat of their great son-in-law. And surely he was the most unfortunate man in that marriage, being as generally beloved for himself and disposition, as hated afterwards for his linking himself in that family, for in all the time of this man's favour, before this marriage he did nothing obnoxious to the state, or any base thing for his private gain, but whether this was his own nature that curbed him or that there was then a brave Prince living and a noble Queen that did awe him, we cannot so easily judge because after this marriage and their death, he did many ill things.

In this favourite's flourishing time, came over the Palsgrave to marry our King's daughter; which for the present, gave much content, and with the general applause, yet it proved a most unfortunate match to him and his posterity and all Christendom, for all his alliance with so many great Princes, which put on him aspiring thoughts and was so ambitious as not to content himself with his hereditary patrimony of one of the greatest Princes in Germany, but must aspire to a Kingdom believing that his great alliance would carry him through any enterprise or bring him off with honour in both which he failed so being cast out of his own country with shame, and he and his ever after living upon the devotion of other Princes. Had his father-in-law spent half the money in swords, he did in words for which he was but scorned, it had kept him in his own inheritance and saved much Christian blood since shed; but while he, being wholly addicted to peace, spent much treasure in sending stately Ambassadors to treat his enemies (which he esteemed friends) sent armies with a less charge to conquer, so that it may be concluded that this then thought the most happy match in Christendom was the greatest unhappiness to Christendom, themselves and posterity.

And as if to foretell the sad event, presently after the gallantry and triumphing of that marriage, the Kingdom was clad all in mourning for the sad obsequies of that most hopeful

²⁶ This is an interesting event that has not been heard of, or mentioned in the trial of Overbury's poisoning.

Prince Henry, who died [1594–1612] not without vehement suspicion of poison and I wish I could say suspicion only; but our future discourse will tell you otherwise: He was only showed to this nation as the Land of Canaan was to Moses, to look on not to enjoy; we did indeed joy in that happiness we expected in him but God found us so unthankful and took so lightly the death of that ever famous Queen Elizabeth as he did intend to make us an example of scorn now, that were formerly of all glory.

His [Prince Henry's] death were foretold by one Bruce a most famous astrologer of the Scottish nation for which Cecil caused him to be banished, who left this farewell with the Earl, that it should be too true, yet his Lordship should not live to see it as the Earl dying in May, the Prince in November following to the infinite grief of all the Kingdom; but Somerset and the Howard family, who by his death thought themselves secured from all future dangers, being a Prince of an open heart, hating all baseness, would often say, if ever he were King, he would not leave one of that family to piss against a wall.

*

The Court physician to King James at the time of Prince Henry's illness was Sir Théodore Turquet de Mayerne (1573–1655), crowned Doctor Caius by Shakespeare. This peculiar man was made physician in 1597 at Montpellier, who's Paraclesian medical views were violently attacked by the College of Physicians in Paris at the time having him driven out by the predominant party of Galenists. He found, however, favour in England where in 1611 he was appointed Court physician to James and later to his son Charles I, and was paid a £400 pension from that King; £400 from the Queen, with a house provided him, and many other commodities, which was reckoned at the time to an amount of £1,400 per annum.²⁷ Mayerne is also gossiped on around this time (1611): "Mayerne, or Turquet, the French physician, is returned out of France, and brought over Moulin the Minister with him, but I think not to remain here."²⁸

²⁷ Birch. *The Court and Times of James the First*, Vol. I, 1848: Correspondence between John Chamberlain and Dudley Carleton, November 20, 1611.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, November 20, 1611.



Sir Théodore Turquet de Mayerne
(1573–1655)

Mayerne was one of the most famous physicians of his time, with a thriving practice among the elite, as can be seen by the intended recipients of his recipes in his medical cases, which he published a treaty on insects, entitled: *Theatrum Insectorum*; the introduction is written by Mayerne, however, the true author of the treaty is unknown. Mayerne received an immense sum by his practice, and was once consulted by a friend, who laid two broad pieces of gold upon the table, (six and thirties) and the physician put them into his pocket. The friend was disturbed at the pocketing of such a fee, but Mayerne said to him: “I made my will this morning, and if it should appear that I had refused a fee, I might be deemed *non compos*.”

The College of Physicians first published Mayerne’s *Pharmacopœia* in 1618; it was compiled with a dedication written by Mayerne, where his national vanity led him to believe, that the weight of Troyes in champagne, must be superior to that of the barbers of England; not recollecting that the English weights, were those used by the Greeks and Romans in composing many of the prescriptions that he had selected. A great practical inconvenience had resulted from his French fancy to the English apothecary, who, from that time had bought by one weight, and dispensed his medicines by another; and it is peculiar, that in the various

alterations of the *Pharmacopœia*, the College had never thought it appropriate to alter the weight units. They could not, as Sir John Doyle observed, want weight to carry the measure.²⁹ In the same year (1618), such was his influence on King James, that Mayerne was sent by him to France, about matters of great concern, but being suspected to come there purposely to disturb affairs, he was commanded to depart, and never to return.

Before the publication of *Pharmacopœia*, it was designated with the title: *Antidotarium Generale*; and the *Materia Medica* of Mayerne, fellow of the College, and physician to four Kings, affords a tolerable specimen of credulity and superstition. His powder for gout had, among other things, been manipulated from human skull, unburied; for Hypochondriacs, he prescribed an ointment made from adders, bats, sucking whelps, earth-worms, hog's grease, marrow of a stag, and of the thigh bone of an ox. The lungs of a man who had suffered a violent death, the liver of frogs, the blood of weasels, and many other ingredients, worthy of the witches' cauldron, were specifics with this great doctor scoundrel of his times.

But to King James, Mayerne was no worthy of the witches. In 1618, James set up a warrant to all Magistrates in the City of London, to take up all reputed empirics and quacks, with other offenders of this nature, and to bring them before the Censors of the College; and the King himself sent letters to the Lord Mayor respecting this. It is unfortunate, that this legislative interference has not occurred more frequently, for William Waad commented: "Our laws are not silent on this head." Sir Edward Coke, in his 4th Inst. 291, tells us: "If one that is of the mystery of a physician, takes a man in cure, and giveth him such physic within three days he die thereof, without any felonious intent, and against his will, it is no homicide."

Mayerne was also well acquainted to and esteemed upon by Jean Petitot (1607–1691) a Swiss miniature painter, who, with the help of his compatriot Mayerne, perfected his technique by using new colours, notably for the flesh tones, and achieving an unprecedented virtuosity in his attempts to emulate the brilliance of Baroque portraiture. It was probably Charles I himself who set Petitot to copy (in miniature) the portraits of the royal family by Anthony van Dyck.³⁰

²⁹ Wadd. *Mems. Maxims & Memoirs*, 1827.

³⁰ Three of these, dated 1638, survive: *Charles I*, *Charles II*, *when Prince of Wales* (both Welbeck Abbey, Notts) and *Queen Henrietta Maria* (The Hague, Willem V Mus). All are of astonishing finesse and delicacy of tonal nuance. It was at the English Court that Petitot met Jacques Bordier (1616–84), who became his collaborator and is generally reputed to have painted the hair, draperies and backgrounds of his miniatures, while Petitot himself concentrated on the demanding areas of the face and hands.

Mayerne was the son of Louis de Mayerne, author of the *General History of Spain* and of the *Monarchic aristo-democratique*, dedicated to the States General, and had for his godfather Theodore Beza; it was only Mayerne's religious beliefs that had prevented him from being appointed physician to Henry IV of France, so esteemed he was in the eyes of Monarchs. We know of the physician's first visit to England in 1607, having had under his care an Englishman of quality, who on his recovery brought him over. He then had a private conference with King James, but returned to Paris, and remained there till the assassination of Henry IV in May 1610. It was in the following year, only the preceding one to the present year that interests us, that the King had caused the physician to be invited by his Ambassador, and become Court Physician to himself and Queen Anne of Denmark, in which capacity he continued to Charles I and Charles II, though under the latter, his office was merely nominal, till Mayerne's death in 1655. Mayerne was admitted Doctor at two Universities, and into the College of Physicians. He was Knighted by James on July 14, 1624, and was a particular favourite of Queen Henrietta Maria.

"He [Mayerne] died of the effects of bad wine, a flow which the weakness of old age rendered a quick poison. He foretold the time of his death to his friends, with whom he had been moderately drinking at a tavern in the Strand; and it happened according to his prediction. The library at the College of Physicians was partly given to that society by Sir Theodore Mayerne, and partly by the Marquis of Dorchester. There is a catalogue of his works, in the *Athenæ Oxonienses*, among which is a book of receipts in cookery. It is to be wished, for the good of mankind, that other skilful physicians would write receipts of this sort, but not altogether according to Cheyne's aphorism (1655) which is 'that the most insipid things are the most wholesome.' Some valuable papers by Sir Theodore, written in elegant Latin, are now in Ashmole's Museum. They have been read by Dr. Smyth, an eminent physician of Oxford, who says that they contain many curious particulars; they especially show the state of physic in this Reign, and discover the first invention of several medicines."

Granger. *Biographical History of England*.³¹

³¹ Vol. II, 1779.

In Mayerne's collection of medical cases, for which he wrote prescriptions and the cases of his patients, was written everything that related to Prince Henry's last illness; this section, however, does not presently exist; it has been torn out. In Welldon's *Memoirs*, relating to the Overbury case, an intelligent truth is written:

"It was intended the law should run in its proper channel, but was stopped and put out of course by the folly of that great Clerk, Sir Edward Coke, though no wise man who in a vain glorious speech, to show his vigilance, enters into a rapture as he sat on the Bench saying, 'God knows what become of that sweet babe Prince Henry, but I know somewhat.' And surely in searching the cabinets, he [Coke] lighted on some papers that spoke plain in that which was ever whispered, which, had he gone on in a gentle way, would have fallen in of themselves, not to have been prevented, but this folly of his tongue, stopped the breath of that discovery, of that so foul a murder, which a tear cries still of vengeance."

There is a very curious instance of the officious interference of friends in medical affairs to be found in the case of King James's death in 1625:

"The Duchess of Buckingham, [Villiers' mother] the Tuesday before he [King James] died, would needs make use of a receipt she had approved, but, being without the privity of the physicians, occasioned so much discontent in Dr. Craig, that he uttered some plain speeches, for which he was commanded out of the Court; the Duke [Villiers] himself, as some say, complaining to the sick King of the words he spoke."

This affair gave rise to a notion that James had been poisoned, and Mead, in a letter to Sir M. Stuteville, (1625) says: "I am told for certainty that Friday at night till the hour of his death, his tongue was swollen so big in his mouth, that either he could not speak at all, or not to be understood."

Certain it is, that this plaster Villiers' mother had given to James, had given offence to the King's physicians, and gave rise to a variety of reports. From the account given of it, in the

Aulicus Coquinariæ, the plaster was obtained from a country doctor, who was not aware that it was intended for the King. The dissection of the King's body, presented some curious appearances and remarks. Upon opening the head it was found so very full of brains, that they could not keep them from spilling: "A great mark of his infinite judgment, but his blood was wonderfully tainted with melancholy, and the corruption thereof the supposed cause of his death."

*

This brave Prince [Henry] being dead, Somerset and that faction bear all down before them disposing of all offices (yet Somerset never turned any out, as the succeeding favourite) but places being void he disposed of them, and who would give most was the word; yet not by Somerset himself, but by his Lady and her family for he was naturally of a noble disposition, and it may be justly said of him, that could never be said of any before or ever will be of any after him. He never got suit for himself or friends that was burthensome to the Commonwealth, no monopolies, no impositions; yet in his time, and by his favour, though not for his use, were brought into the Court two mean fellows, grand projectors: one Ingram, all ordinary waiter of the customs, and the other Cranfield an apprentice, who had served three broken citizens, and it is probable by his wit and honesty he might thrive by them all and lay that for a foundation of his future projecting, the one a brothel of Northampton, the other of the house of Suffolk, and thus like ill birds defiled their own nests and discovered the secrets of the custom house. Yet their projects seemed for the King's profit only, though much water run by hill mill, and Suffolk did very well lick his own fingers as Cecil being dead, Suffolk was Treasurer, the proper place for customs, and his son-in-law Chamberlain and favourite what could not they two do.

Yet Somerset ever kept them but like projectors, which after favourites raised to the degrees of nobility. Only Suffolk by Somerset's power made Ingram cofferer of the King's house, which was the first apparent step to Somerset's downfall; for however the King made fair resemblance to maintain that act, yet made the Earl of Kelly his instrument to set the officers of his household to petition against it and ever from the King's own directions to take their instructions in which one of the principal given, was not to seek to Somerset upon many terms; to deny to accept his favour though offered to disannul his own act, but to carry it with a high hand against Somerset by which assurance was given of prevailing.

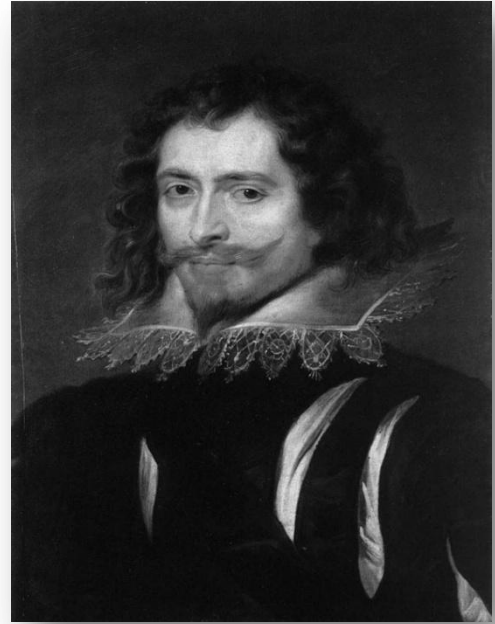
Here was pretty juggling, the Court being then but an Academy of Jugglers, Somerset did often court the officers to make him that Achilles, his weapon that could wound and heal again, but was entertained with scorn yet ambition so dazzled his eyes he could not see the precipice on which they stood ready for their downfall, for surely no astrologer could have given them truer notions of their ruin than this: Cranfield, the other projector, soared higher, though not in Somerset's time could, he have his feathers impeded, but Buckingham after did so impe them that Cranfield endeavoured to pull out his and gave him the first affront, by this you may observe how the times alter from better to worse, and so fittest for worthless men.

There began to appear the glittering of a new favorite, one George Villiers, a younger son by second Venter of an ancient Knight in Leicestershire. His father of an ancient family, his mother of a mean, and waiting gentlewoman whom the old man fell in love with and married, by whom he had three sons all raised to the nobility. This gentleman was come also but newly from travel, and did believe it a great fortune to marry a daughter of Sir Roger Aston, and in truth was the height of his ambition and for that only end was a hanger on upon the Court; the gentlewoman loved him so well as could all his friends have made her for her great fortune, but 100 Marks by jointure, she had married him presently despite of all her friends; and no question would have had him without any jointure at all. But before the closing up of this match, the King cast a glancing eye towards Villiers which was easily observed by such as observed their Prince's humour, and then the match was laid aside some assuring him a greater fortune was coming to him, than one gave him his place of cup-bearer that he might be in the King's eye; another sent to his mercer and tailor to put good clothes on him; a third to his teamster for curious linen, and all as incomes to obtain offices upon his future rise; the others took upon themselves to be his braces to undertake his quarrels upon affronts put upon him by Somerset's faction. All hands helped to the piercing up this new favourite.

Then began the King to eat abroad who formerly used to eat in his bed-chamber, or if by chance supped in his bed-chamber, would come forth to see pastimes and fooleries; in which Sir Edward Souch, Sir George Goring, and Sir John Finit were the chief and master fools and surely this fooling got them more than any other's wisdom far above them in desert. Souch, his part to sing bawdy songs and tell bawdy tales; Finit, to compose these songs; then

were a set of fiddlers brought up on purpose for this fooling,³² and Goring was Master of the game for fooleries, sometimes presenting David Droman and Archer Armstrong³³ the King's fools, on the back of the other fools, to tilt one another till they fell together by the ears; sometimes antique dances, but Sir John Millisert, who was never known before, was commended for notable fooling and was the best extemporary fool of them all.

With this jollity was this favourite ushered in which made the house of Suffolk fret, and Somerset carried himself more proudly and his bravados ever quarreling with the others, which by his office of Lord Chamberlain for a while carried it; but Somerset's using of Sir Ralph Wynhood (whom himself brought in for Secretary of State) in so scornful a manner, he having only the title, the Earl himself keeping the Seals and doing the business made Wynhood endeavoured to ruin him who soon got an opportunity by frequenting the Countess of



George Villiers First Duke of Buckingham
(1592–1628)

Shrewsbury, then prisoner in the Tower, who told Wynhood on a time that Overbury was poisoned, which she understood from Elwaies who did labour by her means to deal with her two sons-in-law, Arundel and Pembroke, Wynhood also being great with that faction, that when it came into question he might save his own sake, who truly was no otherwise guilty but that he did not discover it from Western first disclosing it, then being keeper of the prison. So

³² Little is known of the various personages in this most extraordinary drama. Sir John Finet was Master of ceremonies and author of the curious works upon points of ceremony and precedence, entitled: *Fineti Filixensis*.

³³ Rushworth's *Historical Collections*, Vol. II, p. 470: "Archibald Armstrong, the most noted person in this drama, was the last professed court-jester, or royal fool. He lost his office at the time of the civil wars, when matters grew too hot for joking, and it was unnecessary to revive it at the restoration, Charles II being his own jester. Armstrong was a Cumberland man by birth, and seems to have possessed all the wit necessary for his office, though without the caution which should have guided his sarcasm. Osborne tells us he was tossed in a blanket by Prince Henry's attendants for pointing out to King James the popular retinue which followed his son. Armstrong, taught perhaps by experience, was more fortunate in cultivating the favour of Charles while heir apparent, and followed him on his romantic expedition to the Spanish Court."

by inference not disclosing it was Overbury's death; and had he revealed it then, I dare say he had been brought into the Star Chamber for it and undone, for yet was not the time fit for discovery. Wynhood, it was thought, acquainted the King with it, knowing how willingly he would have been rid of Somerset; yet the King dared not bring it in question, nor any question ever would have been had not Somerset sought to cross him in his passion of love to his new favourite, in which the King was more impatient than any woman to enjoy her love.

Not long Thrumbal (spy at Brussels) had by an apothecary boy, one Reeve, after an apothecary himself in London, died very lately, got hold of this poisoning business, for Reeve having under his Master made some of those desperate medicines, either run away, or else his Master sent him out of the way and fell in company of Thrumbal's servant at Brussels to whom he revealed it and they to their Master who examining the boy discovered the truth. Thrumbal presently wrote to Wynhood that he had business of consequence to discover, but would not send it, desired license to come over. The King would not yield to his return, but willed him to send an express that Thrumbal utterly refused, and very wisely, for letting anything appear under his hand least the boy should die or run away, and then himself made the author of that which the courtesy of another must have justified. The King being of a longing disposition, rather than he would not know, admitted Thrumbal's return and now had they good testimony by the apothecary who revealed Weston, Mrs. Turner and Franklyn to be principal agents. Yet this (being now the time of progress) was not stirred till about Michaelmas; Wynhood did now carry himself in a braving way of contestation against Somerset, struck in with the faction of Villiers, and now on progress.

The King went westward where he was feasted at Cranborn, by a son-in-law of that family at Ludworth and Binden by the Lord Walden; at Charlton by Sir Thomas Howard and nothing but one faction braving the other. Then was the King feasted at Purbeck by the Lord Hatton who was on the contrary faction and at a jointure house of Villier's mother (called Gotly) where he was magnificently entertained. After all this feasting, homeward came the King who desired by all means to reconcile this clashing between his declining and rising favourite to which end at Lulworth the King employed Sir Humfrey May, a great servant to Somerset, and a wise servant to Villiers, but with such instructions as if came from himself, and Villiers had order presently after May's return to present himself and service to Somerset. "My Lord, Sir. George Villiers will come to you to offer his service, and desire to be your

creature and therefore refuse him not, embrace him, and your Lordship shall still stand a great man, though not the sole favourite.” He seemed averse. May then told him in plain terms that he was sent by the King to advise it and that Villiers would not be to him to cast himself into his protection to take his rise under the shadow of his wings. May was not parted from my Lord half an hour, but in comes Villiers and used these very words: “My Lord, I desire to be your servant, and your creature, and shall desire to take my Court preferment under your favour and your Lordship shall find me as faithful a servant unto you as ever did serve you.” My Lord returned this quick and short answer: “I will none of your service, and you shall none of my favour. I will, if I can, break your neck, and of that be confident.” This was but a harsh complement, and savoured more of spirit than wisdom; and since that time breaking each other’s necks was their aim and it’s verily believed, had Somerset complied with Villiers, Overbury’s death had still lain raked up in his own ashes; but God, who will never suffer murder to go unpunished.

To Windsor does the King return to end his progress, then to Hampton Court, then to Whitehall, and shortly after to Royston to begin his winter journey. And now begins the Game to be played, in which Somerset must be the loser, the cards being shuffled, cut and dealt, between the King and Coke (then Chief Justice) whose daughter Purbeck, Villiers had married, or was to marry and therefore a fit instrument to ruin Somerset and Secretary Wynchcombe; these all played the stake: Somerset’s life and his Lady’s and their fortunes with the family of Suffolk. Some of them played booty, and in truth, the Game was not played above board.

The day the King went from Whitehall to Theobalds and so to Royston, he sent for all the judges (his Lords and servants encircling him) where kneeling down in the midst, he used these words: “My Lords, the Judges. It is lately come to my hearing, that you have now in examination a business of poisoning, Lord in what a most miserable condition shall this Kingdom be, (the only famous nation for hospitality in the world) if our tables should become such a snare, as none could eat without danger of his life, and that Italian custom should be introduced amongst us; therefore, my Lords, I charge you, as you will answer it at that great and dreadful day of Judgment, that you examine it strictly without favour, affection, or partiality; and if you shall spare any guilty of this crime, God’s curse light on you and your posterity. And if I spare any that are found guilty, God’s curse light on me and my posterity

forever.” It appears how unwilling the King was to ruin Somerset, a creature of his own making. Grace was offered by the King, had he had grace to have apprehended it.

The King with this took his farewell for a time of London, and was accompanied with Somerset to Royston (where no sooner than they arrived) but instantly took leave, little imagining what viper lay amongst the herbs. James, perfect in the art of dissimulation, or to give it his own phrase “King’s Craft” never parted from his ex favourite with more seeming affection than at this time, when he knew Somerset should never see him no more. The Earl when he kissed his hand, the King hung about his neck, slobbering his cheeks, saying: “For God’s sake, when shall I see thee again; Oh my soul, I shall neither eat nor sleep until you come again.” Somerset told him on Monday (this being on Friday). “For God’s sake let me,” said the King, “shall I, shall I!” Then lolled about his neck; then, “for God’s sake, give thy Lady this kiss for me.” In the same manner at the stair head, at the middle of the stairs, and at the stairs. Somerset was not in his coach when the King used these very words: “I shall never see his face more.”³⁴

But before Somerset’s approach to London, his Countess was apprehended and upon his arrival took into custody. The King being that time at supper said to Sir Thomas Monson that the Lord Chief Justice had sent for him; he asked the King when he would wait upon him again; who replied: “You may come when you can.” And, as in the story of Byron and many others, there have been many foolish observations as presage, so was there in this gentleman who was the King’s Falconer, and in truth such a one as no Prince in Christendom had for what flights other Princes had; he would excel them for his Master in which one was at the kite.³⁵ The French sending over his Falconers to show that sport, his Master Falconer lay long here, but could not kill one kite, ours being more magnanimous than the French kite; Monson desired to have that flight in all exquisiteness and to that end as at £1,000 charge in Gos Faulcons for that flight, in all that charge, he never had but one cast would perform it; and those had killed nine kites never missed one.

The Earl of Pembroke, with all the Lords, desired the King not to walk out of Royston Town’s end to see that flight, which was one of the most stately flights of the world for the

³⁴ This was heard from four servants, of whom one was Somerset’s great creature and of the bed-chamber, who reported it instantly to Welldon who inserted it in his *The Court and Character of King James* (1817).

³⁵ Kite: bird of prey.

high mountee; the King went unwillingly forth, the flight was showed, but the kite went to such a mountee, as all the field lost sight of kite and hawk and all, and neither kite nor hawk were either seen or heard of to this present, which made all the Court conjecture it an ill omen.

So that you see the plot was so well laid as they should be all within the toile at one instant, not knowing of each other. Now are in hold Somerset, his Countess, Monson, Mistress Turner, a very lewd and infamous woman of life, Weston and Franklyn, with some others of less note, of which one Simon, a servant of Monson, who was employed in carrying jelly and tart to the Tower, who upon his examination, for his pleasant answer, was instantly dismissed. My Lord told him: "Simon you have had a hand in this poisoning business." "No, my good Lord, I had but one finger in it, which almost cost me my life, and at the best cost me all my hair and nails." For the truth was, Simon was somewhat liquorish, [sweet toothed] and finding the syrup swim from the top of a tart as he carried it he did with his finger skim it off, and it was to be believed had he known what it had been, he would not have been his taster at so dear a rate; and that you may know Simon's interest with that family, I shall tell you a true story.

Monson was a great lover of music, and had as good as England had, especially for voices, and was at infinite charge to breeding some in Italy. This Simon was an excellent musician, and did sing delicately, but was a more general musician than ever the world had. He had a Catro of immense length and bigness with this being his tabor stick, the palm of his hand his tabor, and his mouth his pipe, he would so imitate a tabor pipe, all if it had been so indeed. To this music would Mrs. Turner, the young ladies and some of that gig, dance ever after supper; the old lady, who loved that music as well as her daughters, would sit and laugh; she could scarce sit for laughing; and it was believed, that some of them danced after that pipe without the tabor, his Master coming to hear of it turned him away, but was infinitely importuned to take him again, he could not have wanted a service, but he never dared use his pipe amongst them, for their dancing recreation, however he might for any other.

And now poor Mrs. Turner, Weston, and Franklyn began the Tragedy. Turner's day of mourning being better than the day of her birth, for she died very penitently and showed much modesty in her last act, which is to be hoped was accepted by God and after died. Weston and then was Franklyn arraigned who confessed that Overbury was smothered to death, not poisoned to death, though he had poison given him. Here was Coke glad how to cast about to bring both ends together. Turner and Weston being already hanged for killing Overbury with

poison, but he being the very quintessence of law, presently informs the jury that if a man be done to death with pistols, poniards, swords, halter poison, &c., so he be done to death and the indictment is good, if but indicted for any of those ways, but the good lawyers of those times were not of that opinion, but did believe that Turner was directly murdered by Coke's law, as Overbury was without any law.

In the next place comes the Countess to her trial at whose arraignment, as also at Turner's before, were shown many pictures, puppets, with some exorcism and magic spells, which made them appear more odious, as being known to converse with witches and wizards and amongst the tricks, Forman's book was showed. This Forman was a fellow [who] dwelt in Lambeth, a very silly fellow yet had wit enough to cheat ladies and other women by pretending skill in telling their fortunes, as whether they should bury their husbands, and what second husband they should have, and whether they should enjoy their loves, or whether maids should get husbands, or enjoy their servants to themselves without corrivals. But before he would tell anything, they must write their names to his Alphabetical Book with their own handwriting. By this trick he kept them in awe, [blackmail] if they should complain of his abusing them, as in truth he did nothing else. Besides, it was believed that some meetings was at his house and that the Art of Bawd was more beneficial to him than that of a conjurer, and that he was a better artist in the one than the other; and that you may know his skill he was himself a cuckold, having a very pretty wench to his wife, which would say she did it to try his skill but it fared with him as it did with astrologers, that cannot foresee their destiny. I well remember there was much mirth made in the Court upon showing this book, for it was reported that on the first leaf Coke lighted on, he found his own wife's name.

*

Breaking from Welldon's narrative, it is worthy to see how spells and witchcraft was handled in those days, and how rumour was as evil. The Inquisition had treated sorcery and witchcraft as forms of heresy, a conception to which Goethe gives expression in the second part of *Faust* when the Chancellor exclaims: "They're heretics and wizard captains! And town and country they corrupt." Especially about the sixteenth century, the secular Courts began to punish witchcraft; in Germany the *lex Carolina* (1532) was named for punishment by fire. No doubt this multiplied the prosecutions. The fact which stated is not a full explanation of the origin and spread of the epidemic at that period. It does not tell us why not merely the populace

but Princes, Doctors, Statesmen, and also Ecclesiastics cherished this delusion. Apart from the writings on the casting-out of devils, the whole of the literature on the devil, which springs up with such dismal luxuriance from the middle of the sixteenth century, is a product of the theological ardour of the Protestant party. If asked to explain what crime they intended to put down by their cruel laws, the legislators and judges of that era would have said: "The crime of entering into unholy compacts with the evil one."

*

Forman was a chandler's son in the city of Westminster. He travelled into Holland for a month in 1580, purposely to be instructed in astrology and other more occult sciences as also in physic, tasting his degree of Doctor beyond seas. Being sufficiently furnished and instructed with what he desired, he returned to England towards the latter end of the Reign of Elizabeth, and flourished until that year of King James wherein the Countess of Essex, Somerset and Overbury's matters were questioned. He lived in Lambeth with a very good report of the neighbourhood, especially of the poor, unto whom he was charitable.

Forman was a person that in horary questions, (especially thefts) was very judicious and fortunate; so also in sickness, which indeed was his masterpiece. In resolving questions about marriage he had good success; in other questions very moderate. He was a person of indefatigable pains. I have seen sometimes half one sheet of paper wrote of his judgment upon one question in writing whereof he used much tautology, as you may see yourself, if you read a great book of Dr. Flood's, who had all that book from the manuscripts of Forman; for I have seen the same word for word in an English manuscript formerly belonging to Dr. Willoughby of Gloucestershire. Now we come to Forman's death, which happened as follows: the Sunday night before he died, his wife and he being at supper in the garden-house, she being pleasant, told him that she had been informed he could resolve whether man or wife should die first: "Whether shall I bury you or no?" "Oh Trunco," for so he called her, "thou wilt bury me but thou wilt much repent it. Yea, but how long first I shall die, ere Thursday night." Monday came, all was well. Tuesday came he was not sick. Wednesday came, and still he was well; with which his impertinent wife did much twit him in the teeth. Thursday came, and dinner was ended, he was very well; he went down to the waterside and took a pair of oars to go to some buildings he was in hand with in peddle dock. Being in the middle of the Thames, he

presently fell down only saying: “An impost, an impost,” and died. A most sad storm of wind immediately following.³⁶

The next that came on the stage was Monson but the night before he was to come to his trial the King being at the game of Maw, said: “Tomorrow comes Thomas Monson to his trial.” “Yea”, said the King’s cardholder, “where if he does not play his Master’s prize, your Majesty shall never trust me.” This so run in the King’s mind, at the next game he said he was sleepy and would play out that set next night. The gentleman departed to his lodging, but no sooner gone the King sent for him, what communication they had, I know not, (yet it may be, can more easily guess than any other) but it is most certain next under God that gentleman saved his life, for the King sent a post presently to London to let Coke know he would see Monson’s examination and confession, to see if it were worthy to touch his life, for so small a matter. Monson was too wise to set anything but fair confession, what he would have stabbed with, should have been *viva voce* at his arraignment. The King sent word; he saw nothing worthy of death or of bonds in his examination. Coke was so mad he could not have his will of Monson, that he said: “Take him away we have other matters against him of a higher nature.” With which words, out issues about a dozen Warders of the Tower and took him from the Bar; and Coke’s malice was such against him as though it rained extremely and Monson not well, he made him go on foot from the Guildhall to the Tower which almost cost him his life; there lay he a close prisoner above three months, the end to get a Recorder’s place (that Cranfield desired) every man thinking him in some treason, would not lend him money, and if so much money had not been paid by such a time his place had been forfeited.

And in this let me commend the part of a true friend in Sir Humfrey May, who at twenty-four hours made his brother Herick take up £2,000 and pay it to save his office, without so much as any security from Monson (for he was close prisoner) or from any friend of his; and that you may know it was for his office, this hard measure was showed him, the money was no sooner paid but his friends might come unto him and I must not let pass the skill of the

³⁶ Lilly’s *History of his Life and Times*, 1774: “He [Forman] died worth £1,200 and left only one son, Clement. All his rarities, secret manuscripts, of what quality so ever, Dr Napper of Lindford in Buckinghamshire had, who had been a long time his scholar and of whom Forman used to say he would be a dunce: yet in circumstance of time he proved a singular astrologer and physician. Sir Richard now living, [1651] has all those rarities in his possession which were Forman’s, being kinsman and heir to Dr Napper. His son, Thomas Napper, Esq. most generously gave most of these manuscripts to Elias Ashmole, Esq.”

Lord Loreskeine, a Scotchman, who long before, by his physiognomy, told Sir G. Marshall that Monson would escape hanging nearer then ever any man did; which was true, for he was twice brought to his trial, put himself both times upon his country, yet was only indicted, never tried, and yet had he harder measure than ever any man had, for he lost his office, being but indicted and not condemned, which is without any president.

And now for the last act enters Somerset himself on the stage who (being told, as the manner is by the Lieutenant, that he must provide to go next day to his trial) did absolutely refuse it, and said, they should carry him in his bed, that the King had assured him he should not come to any trial, neither dared the King to bring him to trial. This was in a high strain and in a language not well understood by George Moore that made Moore quiver and shake, and however he was accounted a wise man yet was he near at his wits end. Yet away goes Moore to Greenwich, as late as it was (being 12 at night) bouncing at the back stairs as if mad, to whom came Jo. Loveston, one of the grooms out of his bed, enquiring the reason of that distemper so late. Moore tells him he must speak with the King. Loveston replies he is quiet (which in the Scottish dialect, is fast asleep) Moore says you must awake him. Moore was called in (the chamber left to the King and Moore) he tells the King those passages, and desired to be directed by the King for he was gone beyond his own reason to hear such bold told undutiful expressions, from a faulty subject, against a just Sovereign. The King falls into a passion of tears. "On my soul, Moore, I wot not what to do, thou art a wise man, help me in this great straight, and thou shalt find thou dost it for a thankful Master." With other sad expressions from the King, Moore leaves, but assures him he will prove the utmost of his wit to serve his Majesty, and was really rewarded with a suit worth to him £1,500 although Annandale (his great friend) did cheat him of one half, so was there falsehood in friendship.

Moore returns to Somerset about three the next morning, of that day he was to come to trial, enters Somerset's chamber, tells him he had been with the King, found him a most affectionate Master unto him and full of grace in his intentions towards him: "But to satisfy Justice, you must appear, although return instantly again, without any further proceeding, only you shall know your enemies and their malice, though they shall have no power over you." With this trick of wit, he allayed his fury, and got him quietly about eight in the morning to the Hall, yet feared his former bold language might revert again, and being brought by this trick into the toile, might have enraged him to fly out into some strange discovery that he had two

servants placed on each side of him, with a cloak on their arms giving them a peremptory order, if that Somerset did any way say out [talk offensively] on the King, they should instantly hoodwink him with that cloak and take him violently from the Bar, and carry him away; for which he would secure them from any danger, and they should not want also a bountiful reward. But the Earl finding himself over-reached recollected a better temper, and went on calmly in his trial where he held the company till seven at night, but who had seen the King's restless motion all that day sending to every boat to see landing at the bridge, cursing all that came without tidings, would have easily judged all was not right, and there had been some grounds for Somerset's boldness; but at last bringing him word he was condemned and for the passages all was quiet.

This is the very relation from Moore's own mouth, and this told to two gentlemen (of which the author [Welldon] was one) that had had no assurance of their honesty, but though he failed in his wisdom, or rather doted at this instant, yet they failed not in that worth inherent in every noble spirit, never speaking of it till the King's death, both the gentlemen being now alive, and had this *verbatim* from Moore in Wanstead Park. And there were other strong inducements to believe Somerset knew that by him, he desired none other in the world could be partaker of, and that all was not peace within the peace-maker himself; for he ever courted Somerset to his dying day and gave him £4,000 per annum for *Fearne resits*, after he was condemned which he took in his servant's name, not his own (as then being condemned, not capable of) and he then resolved never to have pardoned. I have heard it credibly reported, he was told by a wizard, that could he but come to see the King's face again he should be reinvested in his former dearness; this had been no hard experiment, but belike he had too much religion to trust to wizards, or else some friends of his had trusted them, and been deceived by them, that he had little reason to put confidence in them.

Many believe Somerset guilty of Overbury's death, but the most thought him guilty only of the breach of friendship (and that in a high point) by suffering his imprisonment, which was the highway to his murder; and this conjecture I take to be of the soundest opinion, for by keeping him out of the action (if it were discovered) his greatness fortified with innocence would carry their nonsense through all dangers; for the gentleman himself, he had misfortune to marry such a woman in such a family, which first undermined his honour, afterwards his life (at least to be dead in law) nor did anything reflect upon him in all his time of favourite, but in

and by that family; first in his adulterous marriage, then in so bated a family and the bringing in Cranfield and Ingram as projectors all by his wife and friends' means; otherwise, had he been the bravest favourite of our time, full of Majesty, employing his time like a Statesman. The King kept correspondence with him by letters almost weekly to his dying day.

And here we have brought this great man to his end with his Countess, Turner, Weston, Franklyn, and Elwaies who all died in the Tower, and here died this great business, Weston ever saying it never troubled him to die with so many blue ribbons; and it's verily believed, when the King made those terrible imprecations on himself, deprecations of the judges, it was intended the law should run in its proper channel but was stopped and put out of course by the folly of that great Clerk Coke, though no wise man who in a vain glorious speech, to show his vigilance, enters into a rapture as he sat on the Bench to say: "God knows what become of that sweet babe Prince Henry, but I know somewhat." And surely in searching the cabinets, Coke lighted on some papers³⁷ that spoke plain in that which was ever whispered, which, had he gone on in a gentle way, would have fallen in of themselves not to have been prevented, but this folly of his tongue stopped the breath of that discovery, of that so foul a murder, which a tear cries still of vengeance.

*

Taking a short detour again, we offer Kempe's account of the matter, which is very interesting, from Kempe's *Losely MSS*, 1836:

"Robert Carr, or Kerr, a Scottish gentleman about twenty years of age, of a handsome person, and elegant, according to the fashion of the day, in the style of his attire, (a matter of no small importance in the King's eyes) attended on the anniversary of his Majesty's Accession a tilting at the Court in the character of Page or Esquire to the Lord Dingwall. In these martial lists every champion assumed some quaint distinctive device and motto, which this Page was to present for the inspection of the King before the feasts of chivalry began. Carr, mounted on a fiery horse, and bearing his Lord's device, approached the King for this purpose, when his steed, curveting and plunging at the sound of the trumpets, the glitter of the arms, and murmur of the assembled crowd,

³⁷ In Mayerne's collection of cases for which he wrote prescriptions, everything that relates to Prince Henry's last illness is torn out of the book.

threw him, and in the fall his leg was fractured. He was removed to a house in the neighbourhood of Whitehall, visited by the King himself, attended by his own surgeons, and, as marked for a future royal favourite, soon loaded with the inquiries of the courtly crew, to such an oppressive degree that the King was obliged to issue particular orders that he should be left in quiet until his recovery could be perfected.

James Knighted him, made him a gentleman of his bedchamber, and took the pains himself to give him lessons in the Latin tongue. The Earl of Dunbar, the King's ancient confidant, dying about this time, Carr was appointed Lord High Treasurer of Scotland in his room, and elevated to the dignity of Viscount Rochester, not without exciting the jealousy of the Prince of Wales, who beheld in him a dangerous rival in his father's favour. The Lord Treasurer, Robert Cecil the Earl of Salisbury, had formed an alliance with the family of Howard, by marrying his elder son (Lord Cranbourne) to Catherine, elder daughter of Thomas Howard the Earl of Suffolk (Lord Chamberlain) second son of the last Duke of Norfolk, and was further instrumental in marrying the Lady Frances Howard; another daughter of the same stock to the Earl of Essex. This last was a match of a most premature nature, the bride being only thirteen years of age, the bridegroom fourteen. Thus affianced, the young Earl of Essex set out to travel in foreign parts, and his Countess returned to the care of her mother. Her father being Lord Chamberlain, and her mother not altogether of that unblemished character, which in the female sex is always accompanied by a prudent circumspection, the Countess of Essex was suffered to mix at the early age above mentioned, in all the vanities and temptations of a profligate Court; the danger of which measure was heightened by her acknowledged beauty, which soon constituted her the idol of general admiration, and the object of amorous addresses. Henry Prince of Wales was himself one of her unlawful suitors; but the Lady lent a more complacent ear to the aspirations of the King's new favourite, the fortunate Page, now Earl of Rochester.

In the mean time, after an absence of three or four years, her husband Essex returns; he finds the affections of his youthful consort to all appearance cold and indifferent towards him; she declines to live with him as his wife, and he attributing this

unwillingness to the diffidence of youth, applies to her father to prevail on her to abandon so unreasonable a line of conduct. The first principles of virtue in the Countess being undermined, her mind revolted at the idea of retiring with her husband to his seat in the country, or residing with him on conjugal terms.

A belief in the arts of necromancy is well known to have characterized this age; a creed which had the King himself for its patron, and rooted superstition for its source. Nay, there is little doubt but many practiced and studied it from a confidence in its efficacy, and thus had real dealings with the Prince of Darkness, as far as the gross impiety and turpitude of such attempts could place them in connection with him. The Countess determines to apply some black magician of the day, in order to divert the affection of her husband from her, debilitate his body, and heighten and inflame the illicit passion of Rochester. The Countess of Essex finds a willing assistant in a profligate woman, Mrs. Turner, who introduces her to Dr. Forman of Lambeth, a reputed wizard. He is made acquainted with the nature of the case, and of the operation required from his spells. He produces several little images, intended to represent Rochester, the Earl of Essex, and the Countess herself, assuming a power of working upon them by these forms, sympathetically. He dispenses also his filtered doses, to be administered to the respective parties; and Mrs. Turner having an inclination for Sir Arthur Manwaring, a gentleman of the Prince's household, some of the love-powder was secretly administered by her intervention to him, by the effect of which they believed he was made to ride fifteen miles in a dark night, through a storm of rain and thunder, to visit her. The most absurd circumstances are turned to matters of credence by the superstitious, and providence often chooses to confound the wicked by a false confidence in their own machinations.

The Countess was equally credulous as to the operation of these doses on her own husband and on Rochester, and observed with admiration their effects, although the licentious passion of the one which she encouraged, and her coldness towards the other, were quite sufficient to fan the lawless flame on one side and extinguish conjugal affection on the other, without the aid of the Sidrophel of Lambeth. The Earl of Essex,

however, now beginning plainly to observe the misdirected inclinations of his wife, interfered once more with her father, to point out to her the obedience due to him as a husband, and, fortified by his authority, removed his Countess to his seat at Chartley, one hundred miles from the Court. On her arrival there, she affected to be overcome with a deep melancholy, refused all society whatever with the Earl, shut herself up in her chamber with her female attendants, and stirred out only in the dead of the night. In the meantime, she continues to receive and administer Forman's damnable compositions to her husband, by means of her corrupted agents. He, wearied at length with her humour, and thinking he had married one either lunatic or possessed of a devil, even let her return to the Court, and the sphere most suitable to her fantasies.

The Earl of Salisbury now dying, Rochester becomes principal Secretary in his stead, manager of all Court business, and dispenser of all Court favours. In the meantime the Countess of Essex, hastening to consummate the objects of her machinations, institutes a suit for a divorce from her husband, on grounds which prove her to have been destitute of the bare assumption of an outward modesty, and submitted to such a procedure at a Court commissioned for this particular case by the King, as forbids the pen of history at the present day from entering minutely into the record of her profligacy. A curious notice of this suit, corroborative also of the Countess' dealings with the professors of the black art, will be found in Winwood, which shows that those practices had nearly proved an obstacle to her divorce. The writer of the letter in which it is found (Mr. John Chamberlain), after stating there was a rumour of a divorce to be prosecuted this term between the Earl of Essex and his Lady and to that end he was content to confess (whether true or feigned) infirmity in himself, continues: 'But there happened an accident that hath altered the case; for she having sought out a certain wise woman, had much conference with her, and she, after the nature of such creatures, drawing much money from her, at last cozened [tricked] her of a jewel of great value, for which being apprehended and clapped up, she accused the Lady of diverse strange questions, and in conclusion that she had dealt with her for the making away of her

Lord, as aiming at another mark; upon which scandal and slander the Lord Chamberlain and his friends think it not fit to proceed in the divorce.’³⁸

This scandal and slander, I suppose, was hushed up, for the suit proceeded and from a jury of grave matrons, return a verdict favourable to the allegations on which her suit is founded, and the Commissioners, the Bishops of Winchester, Ely, Coventry and Lichfield, and Rochester, Sir Julius Cæsar, Sir Thomas Parry, and Sir Daniel Dun, sign a sentence of divorce, in which the sacred name of the source of all purity and created being is invoked as a sanction to a decree, the details of which are superlatively disgusting. The Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London, to their honour, declined acting, although named in the Commission. The King favoured the whole proceeding, in order, doubtless, to gratify the inclinations of his favourite; nor was indeed, this the first time he had been instrumental to a divorce on a similar plea.

The Earl of Rochester had for his secretary and confidential friend one Sir Thomas Overbury, a man, it is said, presuming much on the power of his Master, and building, like other inferiors, a sort of pride on that foundation, highly repulsive to the noblemen of the Court. Rochester consults his secretary on the matter of his proposed marriage with the divorced Countess, not so much, it may be presumed, with a view of really taking advice, but rather (like the old man in Moliere, who asks counsel of a friend about marrying a young girl) for approbation. Overbury, however, had the decent honesty boldly to counsel his Master against marrying the wife of another man, divorced at her own instance on such allegations. Overbury’s opinion was soon, however, divulged to the Countess by her lover, and by the Countess herself to her great-uncle, Henry Howard the Earl of Northampton, an old and lofty Courtier, who thinking his family insulted by this interference of so mean an instrument as Overbury, and his niece’s prospects of a powerful alliance put in jeopardy, is said to have sanctioned a plot to ruin Overbury at Court, and finally to dispatch him by poison.³⁹

³⁸ Winwood. *Memorials*, Vol. III, p. 53, John Chamberlain to Sir Ralph Winwood.

³⁹ According to Welldon’s tale, though poison was used, it was not that instrument that brought on Overbury’s death, but muffling and suffocation.

Such were the fruits of good counsel given to the wicked. The King purposing to send an Ambassador to a foreign Court, Rochester recommended Overbury for the charge, who was appointed by the King accordingly. At the same time Rochester advises Overbury to decline the office, telling him that it would separate him from an indulgent Master, and through his influence from much higher prospects at home. Overbury, in consequence, declines the commission, and Rochester, in accordance with the preconcert plan, fails not privately to incense the King against him for such an act of disrespectful presumption. James, little disposed to yield one iota of that implicit obedience which he conceived was due to his own earthly divinity, ordered Overbury to be forthwith committed to rigorous confinement in the Tower of London.”

Mr. John Packer to Sir Ralph Winwood.

London, April 22, 1613 O.S. [Old Style date] ⁴⁰

Right honourable,

Since I wrote to my Lady there is fallen out an accident whereof I thought fit to advertize your Lordship. Yesterday, about six of the clock, my Lord Chancellor and my Lord of Pembroke were employed by the King to speak with Sir Thomas Overbury, and to make him an offer of an Embassy into the Low Countries or France, which he would. Whereto he made answer that he was not capable of such employment, for want of language, nor able to undergo it by reason of his weakness being so exceedingly troubled with the spleen, that if he had a long letter to write he was feign to give over, therefore he should not be fit to attend to any business, as in accepting this offer he must be forced to do; and whereas it was alleged that his Majesty intended this for his good and preferment, he would not leave his country for any preferment in the world.

Some say he added some other speech which was very ill taken. This report being made to the King, he sent my Lord of Pembroke for the Lords who were in Council (my Lord Chancellor staying still with his Majesty) to whom he declared, when they were come, that he could not

⁴⁰ Winwood's *Memorials*, Vol. III, p. 447.

obtain so much of a gentleman and one of his servants, as to accept an honourable employment for him. In conclusion he gave them order to send for him and to send him to the Tower, where he is close prisoner. Now for my Lord of Rochester, who had but newly begun to leave his chamber, he knew nothing till all was done and he gone, which your Lordship may imagine did much perplex him.

The rigour of Overbury's confinement is shown by a passage in another letter, addressed by Chamberlain to Winwood: "Sir Robert Killegrew was yesterday committed to the Fleet from the Council table for having some little speech with Sir Thomas Overbury who called to him as he passed by his window, as he came from visiting Sir Walter Raleigh."⁴¹ That the King and Rochester understood one another very well, with regard to Overbury's committal, may be inferred from another passage, in this letter: "Some say my Lord of Rochester took Sir Thomas Overbury's committing to heart. Others talk as if it were a great diminution of his favour and credit, which the King doubting would not have it so construed, but the next day told the Council that he meant him daily more grace and favour, as should be seen in a short time, and that he took more delight and contentment in his company than in any man's living." The Countess of Somerset had now lost one of her minor instruments, who might have been useful in the last stage of the tragedy for which Overbury was destined. The conjuror Forman was summoned by sudden death to that invisible world with which he pretended to have intercourse. In Lysons' *Environs of London*, under Lambeth, we have the following Memoir from Forman, dated September 12, 1611:

"Simon Forman, gent, buried. This was Forman the celebrated astrologer; he was of a very respectable family, being the grandson of Sir Thomas Forman, of Leeds, Knight, and great-grandson of another Sir Thomas Forman. He was born at Quidham, in Wiltshire, in 1552, and was apprenticed to a druggist in Salisbury. He afterwards set up a school there, and having acquired the sum of forty shillings, set off to Oxford, where he became a poor scholar at Magdalen College, and there continued two years. He then applied himself to the study of physic and astrology, and after having travelled to

⁴¹ Winwood's *Memorials*, Vol. III, p. 455.

Holland for that purpose settled in Philpot Lane, where his practice was opposed by the physicians and he was four times fined and imprisoned.

To obviate these difficulties Forman went to study at Cambridge, where he took a doctor's degree and got a license to practice. Being thus fortified against all future attacks, he settled at Lambeth, where he openly professed the joint occupation of a physician and astrologer."

"Here he lived," says Lilly, "with good respect of the neighbourhood, being very charitable to the poor, and was very judicious and fortunate in horary questions and sicknesses. He was much resorted to by all ranks of people; among others the famous Countess of Essex applied to him for his assistance in her wicked doings, and wrote many letters to him, in which she calls him dear father and subscribes herself your affectionate daughter Frances Essex." Returning to Lysons' account: "Lilly tells us how Forman would frequently lock himself up in his study to avoid her, but the contrary appeared upon the trial of the Countess of Essex and Mrs. Turner for the murder of Sir Thomas Overbury. At the Countess' trial, a book of Forman's was produced, in which he made all his visitors write their names with their own hands before he would proceed to exercise his art. It is said that the recital of the name produced much mirth in the Court and the Chief Justice Coke found his own Lady's name upon the first leaf. Mrs. Turner, of all her diabolical machinists alone remained. She bethought herself of her deceased husband the physician's man, Weston, well acquainted with the power of drugs, and she found him ready, on the promised reward of £200 to apply them to any purpose. Sir Thomas Monson, the head Falconer to the King, who was afterwards committed and tried as an accessory to the murder of Overbury, was employed to recommend this fellow to Sir Gervase Elwaies, the Lieutenant of the Tower, and Elwaies introduced him to Overbury as an attendant. Overbury's food was dressed in the Lieutenant's kitchen; and the latter is assured by the Earl of Northampton that it will be acceptable to the King to have him [Overbury] removed. One Franklin furnished the drugs which were mingled with Overbury's food; and it was given in evidence on the trial that corrosive sublimate was introduced into the salt which he took with it. Jellies were prepared and sent him by the pretended kindness of the Countess of Essex and Mrs. Turner, by the hands of Sir Thomas Monson. The Countess being

freed from the bond of her first contracted marriage, and her husband obliged even to repay her portion, for which purpose he ill constrained to sell one of his patrimonial estates, her marriage with Rochester is celebrated at the Court with great pomp. She appears in the habit of a virgin bride, her beautiful tresses flowing over her shoulders to her feet; the King gives Masques at Whitehall to celebrate these unhallowed rites, and the city is expected to pay their compliments to these two minions of his favour. A stately banquet is prepared at Merchant Taylors' Hall, whither the bride and bridegroom ride covered with jewels and costly attire, in public procession, by torchlight, followed by the Courtiers of either sex. Overbury,⁴² cut off from all communication with his friends, languishes under the slow deadly operation of the poisonous drugs mixed with his food, and a dose daily administered by Franklin as a medicine, until death puts an end to his sufferings.”⁴³

Rochester, in the following year, was elevated to the titles of Earl of Somerset and Baron Brancepeth. The workers of these iniquities did not, however, long revel in their success with impunity. The old Earl of Northampton shortly afterwards died. Somerset found a rival in George Villiers, who had begun to attract the King's notice. The Queen regarded Somerset with a very inauspicious eye; and Sir Ralph Winwood, the Ambassador to the States, now Secretary of State, willingly becomes the instrument for searching into the misdemeanors of the tottering favourite. Franklin, the apothecary who furnished the poisonous drugs to Weston, being taken sick in Holland made an open confession of the whole matter, and Winwood is made acquainted with the circumstances, which soon become the subject of public conversation. The King, seeing perhaps a good occasion now to be rid of Somerset, sends for the judges of his Courts, and gives them the strictest charge to examine into the facts of the alleged murder. Coke issues his warrant for the apprehension of Somerset, who flies to the King at Royston for redress from such an insult. On Somerset's arrival in London he was committed to the Tower to the custody of Sir George More, and his Countess was restrained under charge of Sir William Smyth at the Blackfriars.

⁴² A letter from Overbury to Rochester is printed in Winwood's *Memorials*, Vol. III, p. 478, bitterly reproaching him with ingratitude, and telling him that all his reward for services done to him is “a prison, upon such terms that never man suffered yet.”

⁴³ Again, this may not be the true case of Overbury's cause of death.

The accomplices were first arraigned, those being Weston, Turner, and Elwaies. The latter obtained some pity, as he had been only the passive accomplice of the deed. He was convicted on some few expressions contained in a letter from him to Northampton, and bore in his dying words a strong testimony to the force of conscience: "At my arraignment, I pleaded hard for my life, and protested mine innocence; but when my own pen came against me, I was not able to speak, but stood as one amazed, or that had no tongue." When Somerset's trial was about to begin, Welldon relates that Sir George More telling him he must go to trial the next day, exclaimed: "They must carry me in my bed, then; for I shall not go to trial, nor dare the King bring me to any!" These words so alarmed the trusty Lieutenant, that late as it was, twelve at night, he proceeded to Greenwich in search of James. I will not repeat this account, as it may be found earlier in this section.

What impartial mind can altogether acquit James under these suspicious circumstances? He might, without a direct participation, have heard hints from Somerset, while in the height of favour, that Overbury was not likely to be in a condition ever again so flagrantly to disobey the commands of a gracious Sovereign. A warrant was addressed by Coke to Sir Henry Fanshaw and others, dated November 19, 1615, for the examination of Somerset's papers and effects; and a return was made by the parties delegated for the purpose, under the head of: "An Inventory of the Goods and Evidences of the Earl of Somerset, shown to them by Mr. Walter James, his servant, at his lodgings at Whitehall." Among other things, were enumerated letters patents in a box, of the creation of Sir Robert Carr to be Viscount Rochester, Baron of Brancepeth, and Earl of Somerset; title deeds, and other documents relating to lands in the counties of Dorsetshire, Devonshire, Surrey, Northampton, Westmorland, and Essex, the fruits of the bounty lavished on the Earl by royal favour; a general account of all the manors, Lordships, tenements, and heredities of the Earl of Westmorland, among these the manors of Brancepeth, Durham, Raby, Staindrop, Bywell, Bolbec, in the county of Northumberland. About sixty manors are recorded, besides patents for the Constableness of Rochester Castle.

The King was suffering extreme uneasiness, and whatever were the particulars, it arose, there can be no doubt, from the fear lest Somerset, in the rage of desperation, should betray the confidence with which his Sovereign had honoured him. Witness the paper which Sir Francis Bacon wrote: "A particular remembrance for his Majesty: It were good, that after he is come into the hall, so that he perceives he must go to trial, and shall be retired into the place

appointed till the Court call for him, then the Lieutenant should tell him roundly, that if in his speeches he shall tax the King, the justice of England is, that he shall be taken away, and the evidence shall go on without him; and then all the people will cry, away with him; and then it shall not be in the King's will to save his life, the people will be so set on fire.”⁴⁴

Provision was to be made against all possible contingencies; and Bacon, with providence worthy of a better cause, submitted to the attention of James four of them. For the first, he says: “I cannot forget what the poet Hartial saith: ‘*quantum est subitis casibus ingenium!*’ signifying, that accident is many times more subtle than foresight, and overreaches expectation; and besides, I know very well the meanness of my own judgment, in comprehending or casting what may follow. Such a submission or deprecation, as they prostrate themselves and all that they have at his Majesty's feet, imploring his mercy; or, which he thinks most likely, that the Countess will confess, and that Somerset himself will plead not guilty, and be found guilty; or, that he will stand mute and will not plead; or, that the peers will acquit him, and find him not guilty.”

For each of these possibilities, Bacon provides advice to his Sovereign. We need notice the second and last only. For the second, namely, that Somerset might plead not guilty, and be found guilty, he promises: “It shall be my care so to moderate the manner of charging him, as it might make him not odious beyond the extent of mercy.” For the last, namely, that he might be acquitted by his peers, he prepares a more elaborate precaution. Such was the King's dread of Somerset's divulging the secrets to which he had been privy, that under no circumstances was he to be allowed to go at large. Bacon anticipates and meets the danger: “In this case, the Lord Steward must be provided what to do. For as it hath been never seen, as I conceive it, that there should be any rejecting of the verdict, or any respiting of the judgment of the acquittal; so, on the other side, this case requireth that because there be many high and heinous offences, though not capital, for which he may be questioned in the Star Chamber, or otherwise, there be some touch of that in general at the conclusion by my Lord Steward of England; and that therefore he be remanded to the Tower as close prisoner.”⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Spedding. *Works*, Vol. V, p. 96.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 397.

It must be said, that Bacon lost sight of the simplicity of justice; that his supreme object was to meet and defeat James's personal terror; and that to succeed not only availed himself of all the intricacies and provisions of the law, but definitely urged James to employ means for silencing Somerset, which, as soon as he had gained his end, he might safely falsify. But let us continue with Welldon's account.

*

And now begins the new favourite's reign, without any control, now he [Villiers] rises in honour as well as swells with pride, being broken out of the modest bounds, formerly had impaled him, to the highway of pride and scorn, turning out, and putting in all he pleased. First he must aspire to the Admiral's Office himself and would not let the old gentleman ⁴⁶ (so well deserving in that place) die with that title, but the King must put himself to a great charge to put out the better and take in the worse; yet for all his immense greatness, would never let him be Admiral until he had first settled Sir Robert Mansel as Vice Admiral of England, during his life by Patent, in which, he not only manifested his love to his noble friend, though sometime his servant, but his care to the state, that his experience and abilities might support the other inabilities; well-knowing that the honour and safety of the Kingdom consisted in the well ordering and strength of the Navy.

Next Egerton had displeased him, not giving way to his exorbitant desires, he must out, and would not let him seal up his dying eyes, which he had so long carried, and, so well discharged; and to despite him the more and to vex his very soul in the last agony, he sent Francis Bacon, his desired successor (one he hated) for the Seals, which the old man's spirit could not brook, but sent them by his own servant to the King, and shortly afterwards yielded his soul to his Maker. And to the end you may know what men were made choice of to serve turns, I shall tell you a true story.

This great favourite [Villiers] sent a noble gentleman, and of much worth to [Francis] Bacon with this message. [I shall not repeat this story as it has been offered earlier in this Part.] Well, Lord Keeper he [Bacon] was for which he paid nothing, nor was he able; for now was there a new trick to put in dishonest and necessitous men, to serve such times, as men of plentiful fortunes and fair reputations would not accept of; and this filled the Church and

⁴⁶ George, Earl of Cumberland.

Commonwealth full of beggarly fellows (such daring to venture on anything) having nothing to lose; (for it is riches that make men cowards; poverty daring and valiant to adventure at anything to get something) yet did not Buckingham do things *gratis*, but what their purses could not stretch unto, they paid in pensions out of their places, all which went to maintain his numerous beggarly kindred; Bacon paid a pension; Heath Attorney paid a pension; Margrave Dean paid a pension, with many others: nor was this any certain rule, for present portions must be raised; of a poor kitchen maid, to be made a great Countess; for Fotherby made Bishop of Sarum, paid £3,500 and some also worthy men, were preferred *gratis* to blow up their fames and trumpet forth their nobleness (as Tolson, a worthy man, paid nothing in fine or pension; after him, Davenant, in the same Bishopric) but these were but as music before every hound; nor were fines or pensions certain, but where men were rich their fines without reservation of rent; where poor, and such as would serve turns, their pensions, no fines; so Weston, and many others. There were books of rates on all offices, Bishoprics, Deaneries in England that could tell you what fines, what pensions, otherwise had it been impossible such a numerous kindred could have been maintained with three Kingdom's Revenue.

Now was Bacon invested in his office, and within ten days after the King goes to Scotland, Bacon instantly begins to believe himself King, lies in the King's lodgings, gives audience in the great Banqueting house, makes all other Councilors attend his motions with the same state the King used to come out, to give audience to Ambassadors, when any other Councilor sat with him about the King's affairs, would (if they sat near him) bid them know their distance; upon which, Winwood Secretary rose, went away, and would never sit more, but instantly dispatched to the King, to desire him to make haste back for his seat was already usurped. I remember the King reading it to us, both the King and we were very merry; and if Buckingham had sent him any letter, would not vouchsafe the opening or reading in public, though it was said it required speedy dispatch, nor would vouchsafe him any answer.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ Strickland. *Lives of the Queens of England*, Vol. V, 1854: "Sir Francis Bacon, who had been newly installed as Lord Keeper, was the person who governed England in the King's absence. He excited great wrath among the nobility left at Court by the regal airs he gave himself. Many ran to tell tales to the Queen; but this was of no avail, for the great Bacon was very evidently a favourite with her Majesty. They complained that he took possession of the King's own lodging gave audience in the great Banqueting House, and if any Privy Councilors sat too near him, bade them 'know their distance.' As for Queen Anne, she did her best to make peace between the belligerents, and asked Bacon, in a friendly manner, why he and secretary Winwood could not agree. 'I know not, madam,' replied the great philosopher, with simplicity, 'excepting it be that he is very

In this posture Bacon lived, until he heard the King was returning and began to believe the Play was almost at an end, he might personate a King's part no longer, and therefore did again reinvest with his old rags of baseness which were so tattered and poor at the King's coming to Windsor; attended two days at Buckingham's chamber, being not admitted to any better place, than the room where trencher-scrapers and lackeys attended, there sitting upon an old wooden chest, (amongst such as for his baseness, were only fit for his companions, although the honour of his place did merit far more respect) with his purse and Seal lying by him on that chest. Myself told a servant of my Lord of Buckingham's, it was a shame to see the Purse and Seal of so little value or taste in his chamber, though the carrier without it, merited nothing but scorn, being worst among the basest. He told me they had command it must be so; after two days he had admittance; at first entrance fell down flat on his face at the Duke's foot, kissing it, vowing never to rise till he had his pardon, then was again reconciled and since that time so very a slave to the Duke, and all that family, that he dared not deny the command of the meanest of the kindred, nor oppose anything; by this you see, a base spirit is ever most concomitant with the proudest mind, and surely never so many parts, and so base and abject a spirit tenanted together in any one earthen cottage, as in this one man:⁴⁸ I shall not remember his baseness, being out of his place, of pinning himself for very scraps on that noble gentleman, Sir Julius Cæsar's hospitality, that at last he was forced to get the King's warrant to remove him out of his house; yet in his prosperity, the one being Chancellor and the other Master of the Rolls, did so scorn and abuse him, as he would alter anything the other did.

And now Buckingham having a Chancellor, a Treasurer, and all great officers his very slaves, swells in the height of pride, summons up all the country kindred, the old Countess

proud; and so am I.' The candour of this reply pleased the Queen. As to the King, when he returned in September, he silenced all the tale-bearers who had made malicious observations on Bacon's conduct, by bearing witness that he had, while exercising the power which had been viewed so invidiously, never spoken ill of anyone, or endeavoured, either by word or letter, to prejudice him or Buckingham against a living creature."

⁴⁸ In the notes of *Bacon's Life* in the *Biographia Britannica*, strong reasons are assigned for disproving this story. The letters between Bacon and Villiers, which are extant, bear no marks of servility on the part of the former, or insolence on that of the latter. It is true, that Sir Anthony Welldon attended King James to Scotland as one of the Clerks of the Green Cloth; but it seems very unlikely to be in such a subordinate capacity, should be admitted to the intimacy he seems here to insinuate he enjoyed in the King's private conversation. No other historian save Welldon himself, even hints at Bacon's extravagant conduct during James' absence, which, if true, must have been sufficiently public and would not have missed the sniffing gossipers like Chamberlain and Dudley of the time. Yet, we neither have mention of William Shakespeare from these gossipers, a curiosity to this very day for some and for many.

providing a place for them to learn to carry themselves in a Court-like garb, but because they could not learn the French dances so soon as to be in gay clothes, country dances must be the garb of the Court and none else must be used. Then must these women kindred be married to Earls, Earls' eldest sons, Barons, or chief gentlemen of greatest estates, insomuch that the very female kindred were so numerous, as sufficient to have peopled any plantation; nay, every kitchen wench was married to Knights' eldest sons; yet, as if England had not matches enough in the Kingdom they married like the house of Austria, in their own kindred. Witness the Earl of Anglice, who married a cousin germane, to whom he had given earnest before; so that King James, that naturally in former times hated women, had his lodgings replenished with them and all of the kindred. The brethren, great Earls, little children did run up and down the King's lodgings like little rabbit starters about their boroughs. Here was a strange change that the King who formerly would not endure his Queen and children in his lodgings, now you would have judged that none but women frequented them; nay, that was not all, but the kindred had all the houses about Whitehall (as if bulwarks and flankers about that Citadel). But above all, the miracles of those times, old Sir Anthony Ashley who never loved any but boys, yet he was snatched up for a kinswoman as if there had been a concurrency through the Kingdom that those that naturally hated women yet loved his kindred, as well as the King him. And the very old midwives of that kindred, flocked up for preferment, of which old Sir Christopher Perkins, a woman hater, that never meant to marry, nay it was said, he had made a vow of virginity, yet was coupled to an old midwife; so that you see the greatness of this favourite, who could force (by his power over the King) though against Nature.

But I must tell you, this got him much hatred to raise brothers and brother-in-laws to the highest rank of nobility, which were not capable of the place, scarce of a justice of the peace. Only Purbeck had more wit and honesty than all the kindred beside, and did keep him in some bounds of honesty and modesty whilst he lived about him, and would speak plain English to him; for which plainness, when they had no colour to put him from his brother, they practiced to make him mad and thought to bring that wicked stratagem to effect by countenancing a wicked woman, his wife, the Lord Coke's daughter against him even in her base and lewd living. And now is Purbeck mad and put from Court, now none great with Buckingham but bawds and parasites; and such as humoured him in his unchaste pleasures so

that since his first being a pretty harmless affable gentleman, he grew insolent, cruel, and a monster not to be endured.

And now is Williams, sometimes Chaplain to the Lord Keeper Egerton, brought into play and made a Privy Councilor, Dean of Westminster, and of secret Council with the King, he was also made Bishop of Lincoln, and was generally voiced at his first step to marry Buckingham's mother, who was in her husband's time created a Countess, he remaining still a silly drunken sot, and this was the first president of this kind ever known. Williams held her long in hand, and no doubt in nature of her confessor, was her secret friend, yet would not marry, which afterwards was cause of his downfall at the present.

Then was there a Parliament summoned, in which Bacon for his bribery and injustice was thrust out, being closely prosecuted by one Morby a wood monger, and one Wrenham and formerly a deeply censured man. Bacon was by Parliament justly put out of his place, and but only for the votes of the Bishop, had been degraded; the Bishops might have done better to have kept their voices to have done themselves service at this time, but surely that with some other injustice of theirs, had so filled up their measure of iniquity that now God's anger is kindled against them. In Bacon's place comes Williams, a man on purpose brought in at first to serve turns, but in this place to do that which none of the laity could be found bad enough to undertake; whereupon this observation was made, that first no layman could be found so dishonest Clergyman; next, as Sir Nicholas Bacon did receive the Seals from a Bishop, so a Bishop again received them from a Bacon; and at this did the lawyer's fret, to have such a flower pulled out of their Garland.

This Williams, though he wanted much of his predecessor's abilities for the law, yet did he equal him for learning and pride and beyond him in the way of bribery, this man answering by petitions, a new way, in which his servants had one part, himself another, and so was calculated to be worth to him and his servants £3,000 per annum, a new way never found out before. And now being come to the height of his preferment, he did estrange himself from the company of the old Countess, having much younger ware, who had keys to his chamber to come to him yet was there a necessity of keeping him in this place for a time, the Spanish match being yet in chase and if it succeeded, this man was to clap the Great Seal (through his ignorance in the laws) to such things that none that understood the danger by knowing the laws

would venture upon, and for this design was he at first brought in, no Prince living knowing how to make use of men better than King James.⁴⁹

Now was also Suffolk turned out of his place of Lord Treasurer, and a fellow of the same hatch that Williams was brought into his place, Cranfield, that was the projector and never could get higher than that title in Somerset's time, now marrying one of Buckingham's kindred, so that it was now generally said that for pride and baseness these two great places were never so fitted, both of mean birth, both proud, only the one an excellent scholar and of great parts; the other, nothing but a pack of ignorance sawed together with imprudence to raise him (besides his marriage in the lusty kindred).

This Cranfield was a fellow of so mean a condition as none but a poor spirited nobility would have endured his perching on that high tree of honour to the dishonour of the nobility, the disgrace of the country, and not long after to his own dishonour who was thrust out of the Lords House with this censure, that though Lionel, the Earl of Middlesex, shall never sit or have voice more in this House of Peers, and shall pay for a fine to the Sovereign £20,000 leaving him still to overtop the gentry, the Bishops kept him also from degrading, which I do verily believe is one cause the gentry will degrade them.

The Spanish match, having been long in treaty and it being suspected now that the Spanish did juggle with this state in this, as they formerly did in a match with that brave Prince Henry, and in truth, in all other things herein any negotiation had been, only feeding the King with fair hopes and fair words, yet foul deeds. Whether the King suspected any such matter or any whimsy came in the brain of this great favourite and Prince [Charles] to imitate the old stories of the Knights' errand, but agreed it was (it should seem) between the favourite and the Prince only (no one other so much as dreaming of any such adventure) except Codrington, who also accompanied them, that the Prince must go himself into Spain; away they went under the

⁴⁹ If this was really intended, Williams chose an excellent way to escape the plot laid for him, by studying for some time under Sir Henry Finch, choosing an able Master of the Rolls to sit with him in Chancery, and applying frequently for the assistance of the judges. The following instance of his checking the petulance of one who presumed upon his ignorance of the Common law, is mentioned in his *Life* by Dr Hacker: "At his first entrance upon Chancery, one at the Bar, thinking the Lord Keeper as a novice and might be ignorant of the terms of the Common law, trolled out a motion, crammed like a grenade, with obsolete terms. Imagining that with these musty phrases he should baffle the new judge, but the Keeper, with a serious face, answered him with a cluster of crabbed notions, picked out of logic and metaphysics; so that the Councilor being foiled at his own weapons, and well laughed at in the Court, went home with this lesson, that he who tempts a wise man in jest, shall make himself a fool in earnest."

borrowed names of Jack and Tom Smith to the amazement of all wise men, only accompanied with Codrington, and some one or two more at most taking their way by France; had the ports laid so, that none should follow them or give any notice to the French Court till they might get the start. Yet their wisdoms made them adventure to stay in the French Court and look on that Lady whom he after married; and there did this Mars imitate one of Prince Arthur's Knights in seeking adventures through foreign Princes' territories. From there, away to Spain they went, but as the journey were only plotted by young heads, so it was so childishly carried, that they escaped the French King's couriers very narrowly, but escape they did, and arrived safely in Spain their wished port, before either welcome or expected by our Ambassadors or that state.

Yet now must the best face be put on at all hands, that put their grantees to new shifts, and our Ambassador the Earl of Bristol to try his wit, for at that time was Sir Walter Aston also Ambassador at Spain in all occurrences complied with the Prince and Duke; Bristol ran counter; and the Duke and Bristol hated each other mortally. Bristol had the advantage of them there, as having the much better head-piece, and being more conversant and dear with that state, wholly complying with them, and surely had done them very acceptable service (and in this very treaty was one of the pack) Buckingham had the advantage of him in England (although the King did now hate Buckingham, yet was so awed that he dared not discover it). Then Buckingham had all interest in his successor by this journey, so that he laid a present and future foundation of his succeeding greatness.

For all his power and greatness, Bristol did not forbear to put all scorns, affronts, and tricks on him, and Buckingham lay so open, as gave the other advantage enough by his lascivious carriage and miscarriage. Amongst all his tricks, he plays one so cunningly that it cost him all the hair on his head and put him to the diet; for it should seem he made court to Conde Olivons L, a very handsome Lady; but it was so plotted between the Lady her husband, and Bristol, that instead of that beauty, he had a notorious stew [brothel] sent him and surely his carriage there was so lascivious, that had ever the match been really intended for our Prince, yet such a companion or guardian, was enough to have made them believe he had been that way addicted, and so have frustrated the marriage that being a grave and sober nation, Buckingham of a light and loose behaviour; and had the Prince himself been of an extraordinary well staid temper, the other had been a very ill guardian unto him.

But now many Lords flocked over and many servants that Charles I might appear the Prince of England, and like himself, though he came thither like a private person, many treaties were sometimes hope, sometimes despair, sometimes great assurance, then all dashed again, and however his entertainment was as great as possible that state could afford; yet was his addresses too, and with the Lady such, as rendered him mean and a private person rather than a Prince of that state, that formerly had made Spain feel the weight of their anger and power; and was like a servant, not a suitor, for he never was admitted, but to stand bare head in her presence nor to talk with her, but in a full audience with much company.

At last, after many heats and cools, many hopes and despairs, the Prince wrote a letter to his father of a desperate despair, not only of not enjoying his Lady but of never more returning with this passage: "You must now, Sir, look upon my sister and her children, forgetting ever you had such a son, and never thinking more of me."

Now the folly of this voyage plotted only by green heads began to appear many showing much sorrow, many smiling at their follies (and in truth glad in their hearts) and however the King was a cunning dissembler, and showed much outward sorrow as he did for Prince Henry's death, yet something was discerned which made his Court believe little grief came near his heart, for that hatred he bare to Buckingham long (as being satiated with him) and his adoring the rising sun, not looking after the sun settling, made the world believe he would think it no ill bargain to lose his son, so Buckingham might be lost also, for had he not been weary of Buckingham, he would never have adventured him in such a journey. All his Courtiers knew that very well. And for a further illustration of his weariness of Buckingham, it appeared in the parliament before when the King gave so much way to his ruin, that Buckingham challenged him that he did seek his ruin and being generally held a lost man, the King to make it appear it was not so, and that the King dared not avow his own act, brought him off from that parliament, but Buckingham hated the King ever afterwards.

The reason the King so hated Buckingham was, besides his being weary of him and his marriage, after which the King's edge was ever taken off from all favourites; yet this had so much the over-awing power of him, that he dared not make show to affect any other; there was one Juniossa, a Spanish Ambassador extraordinary here, being an old soldier and a gallant fellow, thought that Buckingham did not give that respect to him that was due to his own person or to the person of so great a King, whose person he represented; Juniossa did as much

scorn and slight Buckingham and the Prince, who he found wholly governed by Buckingham, for now Buckingham had found by many passages the King's desire to be rid of him, he made Court to the Prince and so wrought himself into his affection, that Damon and Pythias were not more dear to each other, which by no means could the old King away with, nor in truth did any other like or approve of the Prince's poor spirit, fearing it foretold his future inclination, that could ever endure any familiarity with such a one as had put such foul scorn and affronts on him in his time of greatness, with the father especially, calling to mind the bravery of his brother who hated the whole family for their general baseness, although none of them had ever offended him in particular, as this man had done the Prince at two several times before an infinite concourse, by bidding him in plain terms kiss his ass once, a second time offering to strike him, saying in most undutiful terms, by God it shall not be so, nor you shall not have it, lifting up his hand over his head with a ballot bracer; that the Prince said, 'What my Lord I think you intend to strike me?' The first of these at Roiston, the second at Greenwich.

These affronts were not to be endured by a person, but by a Prince from a private person, surely it showed a much less spirit than should have been inherent to a Prince, and after this, to be so dear with him as to be governed by him all his life, more than his father was in the prime of his affection, I can give it no title mean enough; it had been worthy the noble mind of a Prince to have forgotten such injuries, as never to have revenged them when he had been King, but never to have suffered him to have come near his Court, to upbraid him with the sight of so much scorn, and that publicly offered him before. But at that time I well remember some critics in Court did not stick to read his future destiny.

This Juniossa being a brave daring gentleman used some speeches in the derogation of the Prince and Buckingham as if they were dangerous to the old King; nay, Juniossa sent one Padro Mecestria, [Padre Maestre] a Spanish Jesuit and a great Statesman to James to let him know that he under confession had found the King was by Buckingham, or by his procurement, to be killed but whether by poison, pistol, or dagger he could not tell. The King, after the hearing of this, was extremely melancholy and in that passion was found by Buckingham at his return to him. The King, as soon as ever he espied him, said: 'Ah Stenny, Stenny, wilt thou kill me?' At which Buckingham started and said, 'Who Sir hath so abused you?' At which the King sat silent. Out went Buckingham, fretting and fuming, asked who had been with the King in his absence. It was told him Padro Mecestria, he then asked who brought him to the King,

and was replied, the Earl of Kelly; then flew Buckingham on him to know how he dared bring anyone into the King in his absence, or without his license. Kelly stood up close to him (for you must know, Kelly was the truest alarm to give warning of the downfall of a favourite of any in the Court) and knew his power could do him no hurt with the King at present; although it utterly cast him out of all favour from the King in future. Then Buckingham questioned Padro Mecestria, which quarrel Juniossa undertook, and told him he would maintain him a traitor and wear his Master's person on him; he was a Chevalier, and better born than himself and would make it good of him with his sword.

The Prince was (by Buckingham) made to write a letter of complaint to the King of Spain for abusing him and Buckingham; but the King of Spain returned the letter in a kind of scorn to Juniossa, not as blaming him but rather commending him; and Juniossa in scorn sent it to the Prince, as if he should say, there is your letter to wipe---, which is all it is fit for. The following account of the discovery of the Spanish intrigue against Buckingham, and it being counteracted, is taken from the *Life* of the Lord Keeper Williams, the principal Agent in the whole transaction. It is confirmed, partially at least, by the papers in the *Cabala*,⁵⁰ which refer to the subject:

A paper of information or complaints against the Parliament and Buckingham, was put into the King's pocket unobserved; and in the postscript it was prayed, that Don Francisco Carondolet, secretary to the Marquis Iniosa, might be brought to the King when he and the Prince were sitting in the House of Peers, to satisfy such doubts as his Majesty might raise. This sleight was performed by the Earl of Kelly, who told their errand so spitefully, that the King was much troubled about it, and it struck especially at the Marquis; whom, though he defended in some particulars against any of the Spanish, yet he complained that he had noted a turbulent spirit in him of late, and knew not how to mitigate it.

In this humour he took coach with the Prince for Windsor; and when Buckingham, who attended, offered to step in, the King found a slight excuse to leave him behind, who

⁵⁰ *Scrinia Ceciliania*, 1654.

begged in vain with tears to know the cause of his Majesty's displeasure. Williams, who spared no cost to procure intelligence, had notice by his scout of the information, went immediately to the Marquis, who was retired melancholy to Wallingford house, where he acquainted him with what he had discovered and bid him go to Windsor, and never leave his Majesty to prevent any more mischief in persuading his Majesty to break thoroughly with parliament, and upon their dissolution, to lend the Marquis to the Tower. Buckingham takes the advice, and on Saturday tells the story to the Prince at Windsor, who was early on Monday morning at the House of Lords; and when the Keeper came, took him aside into the lobby, thanked him for the warning given to Buckingham, and begged him to search further into the plot against that favourite. Williams answered, that he knew some in the Spanish Ambassador's house had been preparing mischief, and infused into his Majesty about four days past.

Now you have heard what made the King hate Buckingham, you shall also hear the reason of Buckingham's extreme hatred to the King, which was believed the cause of his so speedy death. Yelverton, a very faithful servant to the King and his Attorney General, and no less affectionate to Somerset, being formerly raised by him without any seeking of his or so much as within his thought, insomuch as to express his love to Somerset, he desired to lay down that great place, rather than aggravate, as his place required against him. This man as well out of his faithfulness as affection to Somerset, was made choice of to work the downfall of Buckingham, in which he apparently showed himself. But Buckingham, as I told you before, out of the King's fear that dared not maintain his own design, but left his instrument to the mercy of Buckingham's tyranny, being once gotten out of this toil, like a chased bear foamed, and bit at all came near him and amongst them, first fastened on Yelverton, put him out of his place, and committed him close prisoner to the Tower. Yelverton having showed himself so faithful to his Master, and he again so unfaithful to him to leave him to undergo the whole burden of Buckingham's fury, did fly out in some passion before Balfore, then Lieutenant of the Tower, and Buckingham's great creature. Balfore telling the Duke of some passages in his passion, the Duke one night about 12 o'clock came in a disguise, and with the Lieutenant only entered Yelverton's lodging. Yelverton at first sight started, verily believing he came in that manner to murder him; yet at last recollected himself, and said: 'My Lord, have you the King's

warrant for this?’ The Duke denied this; then said Yelverton, ‘How dare you enter a close prisoner’s lodging? It is as much as your life is worth, and assure yourself, Master Lieutenant, the King shall know of this, and you must answer it.’ ‘I come to you as a friend, though formerly I confess, upon just cause, your mortal enemy; only to ask you but two questions, which if you will resolve me, I vow to be a greater friend now than ever an enemy, and can, and will restore you fourfold.’

Yelverton told him, if they were such as he might, he would. The first he asked was what wrong he had ever done him that he so greedily thirsted after his blood. Yelverton replied never any, but he was set on by a power that he could not withstand to do what he did; he asked him by whom. ‘By the King your Master who hates you more than any man living, which you might well understand, when in his speech to the parliament, he said he would not spare any (no not any that were dearest to him, or lay in his bosom) by which he pointed them to you.’ ‘Well’ said Buckingham, ‘I see you have dealt like a friend with me by many other concurrences as well as by this; give me your hand, henceforth you are my friend and I am yours and will raise you higher than I have cast you down.’ Which he had made good, had Yelverton lived to save enjoyed it, for he was instantly released, and the next preferment a judges place and had been Lord Keeper, had not death prevented. And if there were no reason, but his change, from a mortal enemy to so firm a friend, it was sufficient to confirm the truth of this story. But the author had this from Yelverton’s own relation and cannot commend Yelverton, because it is verily believed this hastened the King’s death.

Now you have heard the true causes of Buckingham’s hatred to the King, and the King’s to Buckingham, the King having the more power to revenge, had the less courage; Buckingham less power but more courage sharpened with revenge: And however the world did believe the King’s inclination was out of a religious ground that he might not revenge, yet it was no other cowardly disposition that dared not adventure; but although the King lost his opportunity on Buckingham, yet the black plaster and powder did show Buckingham lost not his on the King; and that it was no fiction but a reality that Mecestria had formerly told the King. And now to return from this digression, which is not impertinent besides a great secret.

The Prince returns from Spain contrary to expectation in which the wisdom and gravity of the Spaniard failed him, especially if they did believe Mecestria (besides nature could not long support the old King) and then the Spaniard might have made no little advantage by

enjoying such a pledge: but they have confessed their error, yet do palliate it with having the Prince his faith and his proxy left with Digby, and got thence with the very same trick Sir Francis Michael said he got out of the Inquisition at Rome. Now is all the fault laid on Digby's false play and unfaithfulness to his Master, and combining with the Spaniard and by this piece of service expressed his hatred to the Spaniard for his own ends (the subjects of England having ever naturally hated them) Buckingham from a most hated man then living, from an accused man in the former parliament, came to be the very darling of this parliament and a favourite to the whole Kingdom, which after King James's death he as soon lost again, (so inconstant are the multitude).

In the Banqueting House before both Houses of Parliament is Buckingham to give an account of his voyage which he did at large end to every full point as a further attestation, he said how say you Sir? To which the Prince answered I, yea, or yes and through all his discourse laboured to make Bristol as hateful to this parliament as himself had been to the former, which, had these things delivered by him, and attested by the Prince, been truths, he had justly deserved death, the accusations were foul and little less than treason, without any legislative power.

Digby had some friends who instantly sent this Declaration into Spain, Digby acquaints that King, takes his leave of him for England: that King sets his danger before him, offers if he will stay with him seeing it is for his sake he is likely to suffer, he would make him much greater in honour and fortune than his Master can do, Digby gives him thanks, but says he served so just a Master that would not condemn him unheard, and should he, yet he had much rather suffer under innocence than lie under the imputation of a false accusation of a fugitive and traitor for the highest preferment in the world.

Away therefore comes he, puts himself into a desperate passage, least the parliament should have been dissolved before his coming, and so no place or means left him for his defense, but must lie under those false calumnies and was here (as the Prince came into Spain) sooner than either looked for or welcome. Into the parliament comes he, with his hat full of papers, where he puts himself upon this point that if there were: 'One syllable true that Buckingham had delivered, if this (holding up a paper in his hand) be a true copy; I will yield myself guilty of all treasons can be laid to my charge, these papers, (pointing to his hat) shall make it manifest. Beside some of them shall make Buckingham appear a very monster in his

lascivious carriages too unchaste for the ears of this honorable Assembly; Bristol was instantly committed close prisoner to the Tower for contempt; the next day he was riding through Cheapside in his coach, by which it appears Buckingham's power was in the wain with his old Master, his relation and accusation being scandalous and false; nor dared he bring Bristol to any further trial.' Whether this wound as deeper given by Bristol to Buckingham, or the Prince, I will leave to the reader to judge, and will not myself determine; and how Bristol had since stood in favour with the Prince since he was King may give a conjecture that he took it as a wound to himself; I am sure it was an ill omen and have since given him less credit with his subjects. And in this parliament does Buckingham by his under-hand Ministers and Agents accuse Cranfield (Lord Treasurer) in which the Prince also shows himself.

Cranfield was so hated a fellow for his insolence that a small accusation would serve the turn, as this truly was, had his care of expending the King's Treasure been out of true zeal, for it should seem that the Prince sending for money Cranfield restrained his expense using some words that the journey itself was foolishly undertaken and now must be maintained by prodigality, in which the Revenue of the Kingdom would not satisfy their vast expenses; if this had been spoken out of a noble mind or out of that feeling he had of the Kingdom's misery as being Treasurer he ought to have done had he fallen, it had been with honour and a general compassion, but being spoken out of the pride and insolence of his own heart whose mind was ever so base, as never to discern what honour was, nor ever had he any other inherent honour than what in his Apprenticeship he raked out of the kennel; besides, it was known to be out of hatred that he was not of council in the undertaking, he then looking at himself as the only Statesman of all the Council: He, fell without pity, and with much scorn, as I formerly set down; yet left in an higher estate and better condition than so worthless a fellow and base projector deserved, yet afterwards he was again questioned upon his accounts: but all this was nothing himself and his posterity being left to the Peers of the Realm. In this case was the Prince a principal actor and did duly keep the earliest hours to sit in that parliament, where then he discerned so much juggling even to serve his own ends on Cranfield, that it was not much to be wondered at being come to be King he did not affect them: and it was not so well that a Prince should show so much spleen, [hatred,] though Cranfield deserved any ill could be cast on him, and who knows whether God does now punish by Tallion to call his own sin to remembrance and to repent.

In this place I hold it not unfit to show the reader how the King had ever been abused, and would be abused by over much credulity in the treaty of Spain for marriages, as well as in all other negotiations. You shall now perceive how the King was abused in this treaty, which was an error inexcusable in himself and the whole Council. The Italians having a Proverb, 'He that deceives me once, it's his fault; but if twice, it's my fault.' This second time therefore could not but be the only fault of the King and Council.

In Prince Henry's life time, the King had a little man, but a very great and wise Counselor, his Secretary of State little Salisbury. [Robert Cecil.] That great Statesman, who did inherit his father's wisdom as well as his offices, and the same, came little short of the father, who was held the greatest Statesman in the world of his time. It is true, that one state may abuse another, but not find out the abuse is an unpardonable fault in any Statesman. There was a treaty in the like case for Prince Henry; Cecil instantly discovered the juggling before any other did think of any, for although it went forward cunningly, yet did Cecil so put the Duke of Lerma unto it, that either it must be so or they must confess their juggling. The Duke of Lerma denied that ever there had been any treaty or any intention from that state; Cecil sent for the Ambassador to a full Council, told him how he had abused the King and state about a treaty for marriage, which he had no commission for; that therefore he was liable to the laws of our Kingdom; for when any Ambassador does abuse a state by their commission, then the servant was freed; but without commission, was culpable and liable to be punished by the laws of that state, as being disavowed to be served to the King his Master; the Ambassador answered gravely he did not understand the cause of his coming, therefore was then unprepared to give any answer, but on Monday he would again come, this being Saturday, and give his answer. On Monday he came and begins with these words: 'My soul is my God's, my life my Master's, my reputation my own. I will not forfeit the first and last to preserve the second.' He then lays down his commission and letters of instruction under the Treasurer's own hand, he acquitted himself honestly to this state, yet lost his own, being instantly sent for home, where he lived and died in disgrace.

By this you see the advantage and benefit of one wise Counselor in a whole state; and although Solomon says, 'By the multitude of Counsel doth the Kingdom flourish,' yet surely he intended they should be wise men that are Counselors; for we had such a multitude of Counselors that a longer table and a larger Counsel Chamber was provided, yet our State was

so far from flourishing that it had been most utterly destroyed; this was the last Statesman worthy of that name. And now are the ancient stock of Statesmen decayed and with them all our honour and glory.

I shall now bring my story to an end, as I shall this King's life; although I have made some digressions, yet all pertinent to the discourse of this King's Reign. He now goes to his last hunting journey, I mean the last of the year, as well as of his life, which he ever ended in Lent, and was seized on by an ordinary Tertian ague, which at the season according to the proverb, was Physic for the King, but it proved not so to him, and the poor King what was but Physic to any other, was made mortal to him: yet not the ague, as himself confessed to a servant of his, who cried: 'Courage, Sir, this is but a small fit. The next will be done at all.' At which he most earnestly looked, and said the King: 'Ah, it is not the ague afflicteth me but the black plaster and powder given me, and laid to my stomach.' And in truth the plaster so tormented him, that he was glad to have it pulled off, and with it the skin also; nor was it fair dealing if he had fair play (which himself suspected) often saying to Montgomery whom he trusted above all men, in his sickness, for God's sake look I have fair play to bring in an Empiric to apply any medicines whilst those physicians appointed to attend him were at dinner; nor could any but Buckingham answer it with less than his life at that present, as he had the next parliament had it not been dissolved upon the very questioning him for the King's death and all those that prosecuted him, utterly disgraced and banished the Court.

*

The Countess of Buckingham, mother of the favourite, was the suspected person who administered this suspicious plaster to James. Dr. Eglisham, the King's physician at the time, writes: "This last favourite, George, Duke of Buckingham, advanced to such power with his mother, rewarded the King with poison, by poisoning water, and a plaster made of the oil of toads." Bishop Kennet gives the following account of Eglisham's evidence from the Harleian Miscellany and also from Sommer's *Tracts*:

Dr. Eglisham, one of the King's physicians, was obliged to flee beyond seas for some expression he had muttered about the manner of his Majesty's death, and lived at Brussels many years after. It was there he published a book to prove King James was poisoned giving a particular account of all the circumstances of his sickness, and laying

his death upon the Duke of Buckingham and his mother. I have read the book some fifteen years ago, in the hands of Don Pedro Ronkillor, the Spanish Ambassador, who told me it had been translated into High-Dutch about the time Gustavus Adolphus was entering into Germany for recovering of the Palatinate; and that by a secret order or the Court of Brussels, to throw dust upon the royal family of England.

Among other remarkable passages I remember in the book, there is one about the plaster that was applied to the King's stomach. He says it was given out to have been *mithridate*, and that one Dr. Remington had sent it to the Duke as a medicine, with which he had cured a great many agues in Essex. Now Eglisham denies it was *mithridate*, and says, neither he nor any other physician could tell what it was. He adds that Sir Matthew Lister and he, being the week after the King's death at the Earl of Warwick's house in Essex, they sent for Dr. Remington who lived by, and asked him what kind of plaster it was he had sent to Buckingham for the cure of an ague and whether he knew it was the King the Duke designed it for. Remington answered that one Baker, a servant of the Duke's, came to him in his Master's name, and desired him if he had any certain specific remedy against an ague to send it him; and accordingly he sent him *mithridate*, spread upon leather, but knew not till then that it was designed for the King.

Sir Matthew Lister and I showing a piece of the plaster we had kept after it was taken off he seemed greatly surprised and offered to take his corporal oath, that it was none of what he had given Baker, nor did he know what kind of mixture it was. But the truth is this book of Eglisham's is written with such an air of rancour and prejudice that the manner of his narrative takes off much from the credit of what he wrote."

*

Buckingham coming into the King's chamber even when he was at the point of death and an honest servant of the King's crying: 'Ah my Lord, you have undone us all his poor servants, although you are so well provided you need not care.' At which Buckingham kicked at him who caught his foot, and made his head first come to ground, where Buckingham presently rising ran to the dying King's bedside and cried: 'Justice, Sir, I am abused by your

servant.' At which the poor King mournfully fixed his eyes on him, as who would have said (not wrongfully) yet without speech or sense.

It were worth the knowledge what his confession was or what other expressions he made of himself or any other; but that is only known to the dead Archbishop Abbot, and the living Bishop Williams then Lord Keeper and it was thought that Williams had blabbed something which incensed the King's anger, and Buckingham's hatred so much against him, that the loss of his place could not be expiatory sufficient. But his utter ruin must be determined, and that not upon any known crime but upon circumstances and examinations to pick out faults committed in his whole life time; but his greatest crime for the present, (no question) was *lapsus lingua*. For although he escaped by the calm of this parliament yet is he more ruined by this parliament and his own folly; and truly we may observe the first judgment of God on him, for flying from the parliament his protector, to give wicked counsel to the King, his former prosecutor. And now have I brought this great King's Reign to an end in a violent discourse, and so leave him in peace after his life, which was styled the King of peace in his life.